

LITUANUS

LITHUANIAN COLLEGIATE QUARTERLY

Prelude to Aggression

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A Glimpse into Polish-Lithuanian
Relations

by DR. JUOZAS GIRNIUS

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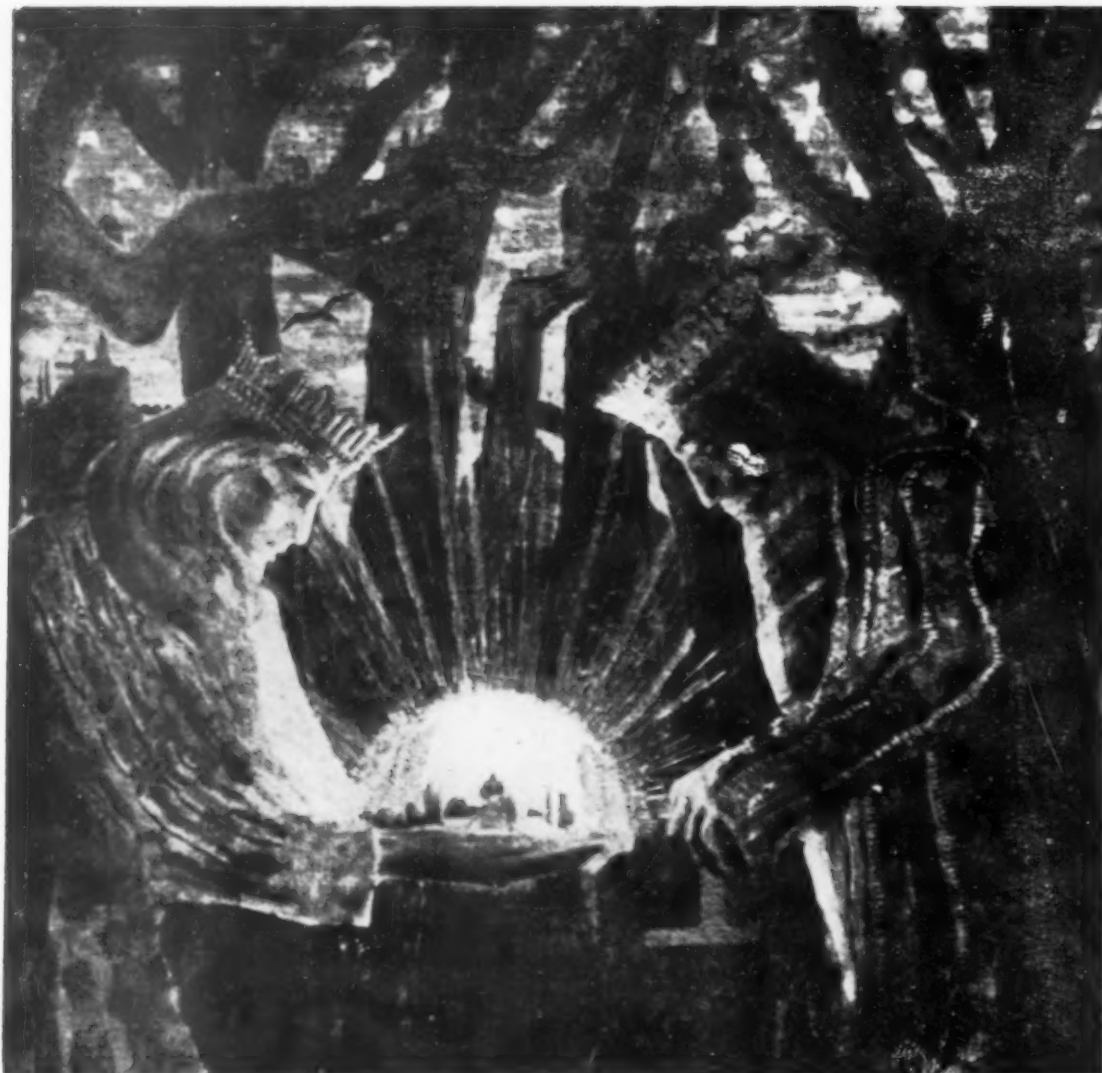
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Language

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M. K. CIURLIONIS

TALE OF KINGS

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LEST WE FORGET...

Occasionally one may find in the American press a passing reference to "those Baltic peoples who have suffered more tragedy than one can bear to think about." And indeed, it does seem from our point of view that the free world sometimes prefers to forget about us, as though we were some distant relatives, now irrevocably dead, perished in a tragic accident. However, like all the oppressed peoples behind the iron curtain or, for that matter, anywhere else in the world, we want to be thought about, we claim that we are alive and that the wound still hurts.

Consequently, we make efforts to communicate with the free world. We present memorandums, we persist in asking that the principles of the United Nations Charter be applied to us as well. We also publish pamphlets and periodicals in which we try painfully, sometimes perhaps not entirely successfully, in an alien idiom, to explain who we are, what we have achieved in the past and what we could still contribute to the progress of mankind if we were now a free nation, able to guide its own destiny.

There is always the danger that our publications may create the impression of a quaint curiosity shop: a folk music instrument; a few names, difficult to pronounce; a sample of national customs; a hint of pride. Nothing really that could create a sense of intimacy with our readers. To a certain extent this is unavoidable, for those are indeed our customs and our thoughts—parts of a picture representing our own identity. We are much less anxious, however, to emphasize how different we are than to make our readers realize that we belong in the same community of human beings as does everyone else.

The cradle of Dylan Thomas' poetry is Swansea—a very small town on the Welsh coast. The people we see in "Under Milk Wood" are local and provincial to the core. It is the magic of the artist that makes us recognize their thoughts and feelings as our own, by the same token making them also universal. In the following pages you will find reproductions of the paintings of Ciurlionis—an artist who was born and worked in a very small country but who nevertheless, at the turn of the century, keenly felt the new dimensions of human experience that the modern age was to bring, as well as the impending terror that was to envelop the world.

It is for this reason that we present Ciurlionis and other Lithuanian artists, painters, thinkers and poets. We want our readers to think of them as people, not specifically Lithuanians, for it is only then that their work will become the heritage of all mankind, as befits any true effort of the human spirit anywhere in the world.

It is only then, of course, that our attempts at communication will succeed, for communication is nothing but the recognition of unity beyond the differences of language, customs and appearance. It is then, we hope, that our readers will understand that our tragedy is their tragedy as well, and that forgetting us means forgetting that part of themselves which makes their efforts to establish or maintain democracy worthwhile in the first place. Any success we may thus achieve will contribute toward the faith in the dignity of free men that is the ultimate weapon no tyranny can withstand.

PRELUDE TO AGGRESSION

By LEONAS SABALIŪNAS

At the end of World War I, with the collapse of Imperial Germany and the weakness of the revolutionary regime in Russia, a number of states in Central and Eastern Europe, claiming rights under the principle of the self-determination of nations, appeared or reappeared as independent political entities.

After the collapse of the three continental powers, efforts to advance international peace, security and order in the world resulted in the establishment of an institution that, with all its imperfections, represented hope for some states and seemed to provide certain guarantees for the existence of others. Gradually, however, there appeared on the international scene a number of other states that appeared to be ready to challenge the rule of international law issuing from the League of Nations. The situation became such that a number of states that not only considered themselves devoted to international law but to a great extent depended on it for their very existence found themselves confronted with the combined might of certain powers that defied both the law and its embodiment, the League of Nations.

The events of 1939 were ominous for small states like Lithuania. Certain occurrences on the international scene had already demonstrated that reliance on international law could be fatal in an age when that law was observed by the powerful states only when it did not concern their "vital interests." Unfortunately, such reliance was the only resource for some states.

On June 15, 1940, Soviet troops entered Lithuania. The Lithuanian state, which had experienced in the course of its long history times of grandeur and times of misery, again ceased to exist as an independent political entity. However, before the country was actually occupied there was a period of revealing negotiations on the part of the Soviet Union, first with the Western powers, then with Germany, then with Lithuania herself. There was a prelude...

NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE WESTERN POWERS

After the Czechoslovak crisis early in 1939, Britain and France sought new measures to prevent possible future German conquests. Negotiations between England and Poland were initiated on April 4, and at their conclusion a joint declaration was issued. This declaration provided for mutual assistance "in case of 'any threat, direct or indirect, to the independence of others.'" A final

agreement to this effect was signed on August 25, 1939. Under both the declaration and the final agreement, Lithuania was included in the Polish security system.

The developments of 1939 troubled the Soviet Union as much as they did England and France. Negotiations for a possible rapprochement were initiated in the summer of 1939, and at one stage a second Triple Entente appeared probable. But then the "Baltic question" arose.

Soviet intentions in the Baltic region were not fully revealed at the opening of the discussions in Moscow. Winston Churchill, who was not yet in the government, advocated mutual assistance agreements that would go into effect in case of a German advance through the Baltic states.¹ On June 7, Neville Chamberlain reported to the House of Commons that "His Majesty's Government have been able to satisfy the Soviet Government that they are in fact prepared to conclude an agreement on the basis of full reciprocity."² Instead of the proposed pledges, Russia sought a firm alliance. Britain accepted the Soviet views, and it seemed that only the details remained to be worked out.

It became evident during the course of these British-French-Soviet discussions of 1939 that the Soviet Union "harbored certain aspirations toward the Baltic states."³ By June 22 there remained no doubts as to Soviet intentions in the Baltic area: "...Great Britain should assent to the forcible absorption of the three independent states of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia into the Soviet Union."⁴ The Soviet demands were put forth at a time when the German Ambassador was returning to Moscow to negotiate a "trade." From now on the Soviets began to negotiate with both the Western powers and the Germans. The Western powers were clearly at a disadvantage in such negotiations, since there were limits to the Soviet claims they could satisfy. For while England and France were seeking only security through alliances, the Soviet Union was seeking both security and territorial expansion. And as matters finally stood in the negotiations, the Russians tried to gain Western approval of their aggression in the Baltic area.

In answer to those critics of the British stand who maintain that Britain failed to satisfy the Soviet need for security, it must be pointed out that it was not security that the Soviet Union was really seeking in the negotiations. The whole Soviet security argument does not stand up, since (a) England and France were prepared to sign a pact with the Soviet Union that would have

provided for a common front against Germany and that would have satisfied Soviet security demands — what England and France refused to do was condone Soviet territorial ambitions in the Baltic area; (b) when the Russians did receive the Baltic states into their sphere of interest and succeed in setting up military bases in them, they still liquidated the Baltic states in 1940; (c) only later (see below) did the Russians finally reveal their intentions in Europe generally and in the Baltic area in particular.

No matter how much Britain wanted an understanding with the Soviet Union, she refused to second the plans for Soviet aggression in the Baltic region. Britain refused to yield even when the Russians tried to disguise their demands under the definition of "indirect aggression," which would have permitted them to interfere in the affairs of the Baltic countries under practically any pretext. On July 31, Chamberlain referred the matter to the House of Commons: "We are extremely anxious not even to appear to be desirous of encroaching upon the independence of other states. And if we have not agreed so far with the Soviet Government upon this definition of indirect aggression, it is because the formula which they favoured appeared to us to carry that precise signification."⁵ England's refusal to give in to the Soviet demands just about ended efforts to reach an agreement with the Soviets at this time and on these particular matters.

Developments now gained momentum: the Russians accelerated their negotiations with the Germans. The Soviet government's first attempts to come to some understanding with the German government seem to have been made after the exposure of the weakness of the Western powers by the Munich crisis of 1938.⁶ In 1939, after Russia's disagreements with England and France over the questions referred to above, these attempts were renewed. Conditions were now favorable for an understanding with the Germans. Russia and Germany soon agreed on their objectives in Central and Eastern Europe, and no considerations could stand in their way. Both states sought territorial expansion, and both ignored international law and equity — the only force that could possibly check their combined advance at this time.

During the earlier negotiations between England and the Soviet Union, there was hardly any common ground on which those two countries could meet to deal with the problems at hand. Russia could not understand why England refused to condone her aggression in the Baltic states, while England held that "in failing to uphold the liberties of others we run a great risk of betraying the principle of liberty itself, and with it our own freedom and independence. We have built up a society with values which are accepted not only in this country but over vast areas of the world."⁷ Now, in the negotiations between Germany and the Soviet Union, no such obstacles as "principle," as "freedom and independence," "values" were ap-

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parent. In the words of Lord Halifax, "Herr Hitler bartered what was not his property to barter — the liberties of the Baltic people (Finland)..."⁸ In 1943, K. V. Grinius paid tribute to England: "In justice and honor to British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and his Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Lord Halifax, it must be stressed that the British delegates had refused to condone this Muscovite concept (of "indirect aggression"), mostly on ethical-moral considerations."⁹

The Baltic states remained strictly neutral throughout the course of the negotiations. It would appear that this Baltic policy of neutrality, especially in the case of Lithuania, was a simple necessity rather than a calculated course. As matters stood in 1939, Lithuania's only alternatives to strict neutrality would seem to have been either self-annihilation through armed resistance against Russia or Germany or a state of dependence on Russia or Germany. Alliance with either power on equal terms was out of the question. Germany's intentions had already been revealed in Austria, Klaipėda (Memel), Czechoslovakia and Poland — all of which pointed to the probable future course of that powerful state, especially in its relations with its weaker neighbors. Nor could there be any doubt about Soviet Russia's aspirations. Russia's intentions in regard to the Baltic states were fully revealed in her negotiations with England and France. Evidence now seems to indicate that Stalin hoped to see the Western powers fighting Germany in a long war, with Russia intervening at a time of her own choice in order to realize her objectives in Europe.¹⁰ Molotov disclosed such intentions to the Lithuanian Foreign Minister, V. Krėvė-Mickevičius, in 1940:

You must take a good look at reality and understand that in the future small nations will have to disappear. Your Lithuania along with the other Baltic nations, including Finland, will have to join the glorious family of the Soviet Union. Therefore you should begin now to initiate your people into the Soviet system which in the future shall reign everywhere, throughout all Europe; put into practice earlier in some places, as in the Baltic nations, later in others.¹¹

This, certainly, was not an argument for security, either Lithuania's or Russia's, as the Soviets maintained throughout all their negotiations, first with the Western powers and later with the Baltic states themselves.

On August 23, 1939, Von Ribbentrop and Molotov signed the nonaggression pact. The pact con-

tained a Secret Supplementary Protocol that clearly defined the spheres of influence of Germany and Russia with respect to Central and Eastern Europe. Under this protocol, Lithuania found herself in the German sphere of influence. The consequences of the pact were felt immediately.

LITHUANIA DURING THE GERMAN-POLISH WAR

The German-Polish war began on September 1. On September 4, Lithuania announced her policy of neutrality.

It has already mentioned that the Secret Supplementary Protocol of the August 23 nonaggression pact placed Lithuania in the German sphere of influence. It should be noted, however, that no mention was made of this protocol in the official announcement of the nonaggression pact, and it was only certain subsequent events that indicated that some kind of an agreement on spheres of influence had been reached between Russia and Germany.

Immediately after the outbreak of the war, Germany, acting under the protocol, suggested that Lithuania enter the war against Poland — thus becoming, in effect, Germany's ally.¹² Dr. Peter Bruno Kleist, of the N.S.D.A.P. Dienststelle von Ribbentrop, approached the Lithuanian Minister in Berlin with such a suggestion. Dr. Kleist promised German assistance, and hinted that Lithuania need not fear the Soviet Union if she attacked Poland.¹³ (This is one of the indications that there existed a Russo-German understanding on Eastern Europe.) On September 21, 1939, Ribbentrop personally suggested to the Lithuanian Minister in Berlin that Lithuania enter the war. Throughout these approaches the Germans pressed for immediate action on Lithuania's part. From the German point of view, it was only natural that Lithuania should enter the war against Poland. Germany offered Lithuania all she could desire: her ancient capital of Vilnius together with the Vilnius territory, all of which had been seized by the Poles some twenty years previously. This was probably the greatest temptation that Lithuania experienced in her brief period of independent existence between the two world wars. For only a Lithuanian can understand what Vilnius means to Lithuania. For twenty years the Lithuanian government had refused to recognize the seizure of the country's historic capital; for twenty years Vilnius had been held to be constitutionally the permanent capital of Lithuania, and Kaunas had been called merely its provisional capital; for twenty years the Lithuanian nation had lived in hope that Vilnius would someday be reunited with Lithuania. And yet Lithuania countered all the German temptations with a reassertion of her strict neutrality. Furthermore, rather than joining Germany in her attack on Poland, Lithuania proceeded to give all assistance to the Polish refugees who poured into the country by

the thousands. Lithuania's decision appears to have been based on "wisdom and conscience" and not on emotions; it can be explained in no other way.¹⁴ The distance between the Lithuanian border and Vilnius could have been covered in a couple of hours; Lithuanian-Russian relations were more than merely good, even without the Russo-German pact; Germany promised military assistance, and Poland could offer no resistance at all. And yet the attack was not made. Sven Auren, a Swedish writer who was in Lithuania at the time of the German-Polish conflict, pays tribute to Lithuania: "The Lithuanians behaved splendidly... They behaved like gentlemen in their hour of testing, for they hated the Poles... In September, 1939, Lithuania proved herself to be one of Europe's most civilized nations."¹⁵

On September 17, Russia invaded Poland from the east. On September 28, under the Secret Supplementary Protocol to the German-Soviet Boundary and Friendship Treaty,¹⁶ Lithuania was transferred to the Soviet sphere of influence in exchange for certain Polish territory that was given to Germany. The mass repatriation to Germany proper of some 100,000 Balts of German origin provided evidence that some kind of understanding existed between Russia and Germany. This was a rather significant undertaking, since the families of all those repatriated had lived in the Baltic states for centuries.

Faced with pressures from East and West, Lithuania based her hopes on "loyal and scrupulous" neutrality.¹⁷ In pursuit of this policy, Lithuania avoided any action that might be interpreted as hostile to either Russia or Germany and thus serve as a pretext for intervention.

Thus it is evident from the events described that conditions in the Baltic region were such as to make neutrality the only feasible course, setting aside the ephemeral advantages that might have gained for Lithuania had she entered into war against Poland. Events proved, however, that at this period international law and equity were considerations of secondary importance to the two great continental powers involved. Furthermore, in the absence of conditions for defending herself — either a substantial armed force or a favorable geographic position — the Lithuanian state was destined to survive only as long as the Soviet Union desired such a survival. But "if Lithuania was to be crushed, she still preferred to fall together with the crumbling fabric of law."¹⁸

SOVIET-LITHUANIAN NEGOTIATIONS

The Secret Supplementary Protocol signed on August 23, 1939, shall be amended in item 1 to the effect that the territory of the Lithuanian state falls to the sphere of influence of the U.S.S.R....

From the Protocol of September 28

On September 29, Dr. Natkus, Lithuania's Minister in Moscow, returned to Kaunas to give

MAP OF LITHUANIA



his government information on the talks he had had with Russia's Foreign Minister Molotov. He brought with him an invitation from the Soviet government to Lithuania's Foreign Minister, J. Urbšys, to visit Moscow. That very same evening a conference of the Council of Ministers, under the chairmanship of President A. Smetona, was held. The Minister reported on the recent developments arising out of the occupation of Poland. The proposed trip of the Foreign Minister to Moscow did not appear to disturb Dr. Natkus, but both President Smetona and Foreign Minister Urbšys felt differently.¹⁹ It must be noted that the Foreign Ministers of Latvia and Estonia were already in Moscow. The general public was kept in ignorance of any uneasiness that was felt; the proposed trip to Moscow was publicly presented as simply an attempt to settle the Vilnius question.

When the Soviet Minister in Kaunas, Pozdniakov, was asked about the discussions in Moscow, he said that they would concern Vilnius, mutual assistance between the two countries and other, unspecified matters. On September 19, the *New York Times* reported that "Vilna and the surrounding areas were expected to be the subject of conversations between Lithuanians and the Soviet Union in Moscow within a few days. It was indicated that Lithuania would not demand the restoration of Vilna, but was hopeful that the Soviet Union might open the question in connection with the Polish settlement."²⁰ The invitation was accepted by Lithuania, and Foreign Minister Urbšys left Kaunas on October 2.

In Moscow the Foreign Minister received a

proper reception. At seven in the evening of the same day he attended the first meeting with Soviet officials. In this first meeting in the Kremlin, Lithuania was represented by Urbšys and Dr. Natkus; Stalin, Molotov, Potemkin and Pozdniakov represented the Soviet Union. Stalin opened the meeting. He spoke first of the situation created in Eastern Europe by the collapse of Poland. He accused Poland of a failure to see the rapid changes that were taking place in conditions in Eastern Europe, and added that Poland must now suffer in consequence of this failure. Stalin remarked that the war in Europe was not over, and that to him the security of the Soviet Union was the primary concern. He emphasized that the Soviet Union did not intend to infringe upon the sovereignty of other states. The interests of security, however, required that Lithuania agree to sign certain agreements, which were not disclosed at the time.²¹ Stalin's speech was vague and not very informative.

Molotov, like Stalin before him, then spoke of the changed situation in Eastern Europe. There was an implied warning in his speech that Germany might threaten Lithuania's security, and that the question of that security should be re-examined accordingly. Molotov, unlike Stalin, emphasized Lithuania's security rather than the Soviet Union's. He proposed a mutual assistance pact to safeguard Lithuania's independence, but again no details were presented. Lithuania's Foreign Minister gave an equally evasive, general reply. Before any further discussions could be fruitful, concrete proposals would have to be presented.

Stalin then proceeded to formulate three treaties that he expected the Lithuanian government to sign: (a) a treaty relating to the return of Vilnius and the surrounding territory (only part of the Vilnius territory would be turned over to Lithuania, however); (b) a treaty establishing a mutual assistance pact between Lithuania and the Soviet Union; (c) a treaty ceding part of Lithuania's territory (the Suvalkai territory — see map) to Germany. The Russians even suggested that the agreement transferring Lithuanian territory be signed there in Moscow by the Lithuanian representatives and the German Ambassador. The first proposal created no important difficulties, and there was room for discussion of the second, but the third proposed treaty was a blow to Lithuania in two ways; the demand that Lithuania hand over a portion of her territory to Germany was unexpected here in Moscow, and the suggestion that everything could be arranged with Ambassador Schulenberg clearly hinted that some kind of agreement between Russia and Germany had been concluded at Lithuania's expense. Why, if no such agreement existed, would Stalin find it possible to speak for Germany? Foreign Minister Urbšys first thanked Stalin for the proffered return of Vilnius and then asked what precisely was meant by the proposed transfer of Lithuanian territory. At this point Molotov interjected that the question of Lithuania's cession of territory had already been settled between himself and Von Ribbentrop. Urbšys protested in vain.²² The first meeting ended after midnight. Detailed draft proposals were needed for further discussions.

The second meeting was called for 1:30 that same morning, just about an hour after the end of the first meeting. The participants were the same. (Apparently the draft treaties had been prepared in advance of the first meeting but were not presented then for purely tactical reasons.) The first treaty would return Vilnius to Lithuania under the Soviet-Lithuanian treaty of July 12, 1920. The second draft called for mutual assistance and also asked that 50,000 Red Army men be stationed in Lithuania at points chosen by Russia; a military pact to this end would be concluded. Lithuania was accorded no rights on Soviet Union territory. Foreign Minister Urbšys still sought to dissuade Stalin from his course, arguing that the proposed bases would threaten Lithuania's independence and under international law would constitute an infringement upon the state's sovereignty. He finally asked that a mutual assistance treaty be considered that did not call for the quartering of Soviet troops on Lithuanian soil. Stalin and Molotov were visibly nervous.²³ Minister Urbšys argued that the pact in the form proposed by the Soviet Union would in effect constitute the occupation of Lithuania by the Soviet Union. Stalin referred to it, however, as "assistance." Molotov reminded the Lithuanian representatives of the Soviet Union's friendly attitude toward Lithuania in the past, and repeated Stalin's conten-

tion that the pact was to be interpreted solely as evidence of the Soviet Union's concern for Lithuania's security as well as her own. While Molotov was speaking, Stalin suggested that the number of Soviet troops to be based in Lithuania be set at 35,000 rather than 50,000. During this discussion Molotov informed the Lithuanian representatives that Estonia had already signed similar agreements and that Latvia would do so in the near future. He sharply criticized the "negative view" taken by the Lithuanian delegation, saying it endangered the whole Soviet security system in the Baltic area. He even threatened that such an attitude would lead to unfriendly relations between the two states. At this point Stalin called for refreshments, and the tenseness was somewhat alleviated. The conversations now continued without the usual formalities. Stalin repeatedly emphasized that the Soviet troops in Lithuania would constitute no danger to the Lithuanian state; they would remain there solely for the country's protection. Finally Minister Urbšys told the Russians that he would have to return to Kaunas to inform the Lithuanian government of the Russian proposals. Stalin appeared to be annoyed at this, but Urbšys was insistent. The second meeting ended at 6 a.m.

On October 4, Minister Urbšys arrived in Kaunas with the draft treaties. The Germans were notified that he would be in Kaunas for two days, so they could make known the German views on the negotiations with the Soviets.

The Lithuanian government was unanimously of the opinion that Soviet bases on Lithuanian soil would be irreconcilable with the concept of sovereignty and would constitute a clear threat to Lithuania's existence as an independent political entity. The Soviet demands were held to be contrary to the existing good relations between the two governments. And indeed, looking at matters in the light of legality and in the spirit of international law, ample grounds existed for the Lithuanian government's contentions. Unfortunately, at the time and in that part of Europe, at least, political questions were not settled under international law. Things would have been bad enough had the pressure come only from Russia; in view of the Russo-German agreement on joint action in Eastern Europe, they were fatal.

On October 5, Foreign Minister Urbšys approached the German Minister in Kaunas, Dr. Zechlin, in order to learn the German stand on the various questions that had been raised. Dr. Zechlin told the Foreign Minister that Germany did not intend to put into effect the agreements she had concluded with the Soviet Union.²⁴ The Lithuanian government realized from this interview with the German Minister that German action with respect to the agreed Lithuanian territory had been postponed only temporarily, and — what is of great importance — that in their negotiations with the Russians the Lithuanians

would have to rely on their own strength; no assistance in any form could be looked for from Germany.

On October 5 the news reached Kaunas that Latvia had also signed agreements with Moscow, but the Lithuanian government was still resolved not to give in. On October 6 the Council of Ministers, under President Smetona's chairmanship, met prior to the return of the Lithuanian delegation to Moscow. It was agreed that the mutual assistance pact was acceptable to Lithuania, but not the Soviet troops. The draft proposals were modified so as to provide for a Soviet military mission with the Lithuanian Army staff on condition that a Lithuanian military mission, even if a smaller one, be accepted by the Soviets. The Lithuanian delegation arrived in Moscow with these instructions on October 7.

The delegation was now made up of Foreign Minister Urbšys, chairman; Deputy Prime Minister K. Bizauskas; Gen. S. Raštikis, Commander-in-Chief of the Army; and a number of advisers. The third meeting was called for ten o'clock that same evening. Molotov, Potemkin and Pozdniakov were present for the Russians. Minister Urbšys opened the meeting with a long speech rejecting the Soviet proposals; he spoke of the history of the Lithuanian nation, of the Soviet recognition of Lithuania after World War I, of Soviet assistance to Lithuania and of the general good relations between the two states. He argued that the pact as proposed by the Soviet Union would be viewed there as occupation forces. In the eyes of the international community, Lithuania would be a vassal state.²⁵ He then asked for a pact without Soviet troops in place of the pact as formulated by Moscow. As might have been expected, Molotov was not satisfied with this answer. In response to the Lithuanian Foreign Minister, he now openly emphasized Russia's security: "The present war has not unfolded entirely; it is difficult to forecast its repercussions and, therefore, the Soviet Union considers its security... I should point out that Lithuania is much more important to the Soviet Union than Latvia and Estonia."²⁶ Since all important decisions had to be approved by Stalin, however, Molotov promised to bring the Lithuanian proposals to Stalin's attention. It was evident from Molotov's attitude that the Lithuanian position was unacceptable to Moscow, but hope persists in the face of discouragement, and the Lithuanian delegation still hoped.

The fourth meeting was held at 5:30 p.m. on October 8, in the Kremlin. Stalin again was present, and point by point he rejected Lithuania's proposals. He once more reduced the proposed Soviet force in Lithuania, this time to 20,000 men. Again he spoke of Lithuania's independence. Again he promised not to interfere in Lithuania's internal affairs, and he even offered to warn the Lithuanian Communist Party not to engage in any disturbances. When Stalin had finished, all the

members of the Lithuanian delegation expressed themselves as against the Soviet proposals. At one point Stalin interrupted Foreign Minister Urbšys with the remark that he was overstating his case,²⁷ and Molotov added that all that remained to do was for the Lithuanians to agree. Minister Urbšys and Gen. Raštikis then offered what amounted to a compromise. They proposed that Lithuania agree in advance to resist any aggression on Germany's part either against Lithuania herself or against the Soviet Union through Lithuania, and more detailed offers along this line were made to guarantee Russia's security.²⁸ Even this offer was unacceptable. Minister Urbšys, in final attempt, begged Stalin not to insist on Soviet bases. Stalin refused to compromise. Again Minister Urbšys told the Russians that he would have to contact his government, since he was not authorized to conclude such an agreement.

On October 9 two members of the Lithuanian delegation, Deputy Premier Bizauskas and Gen. Raštikis, left Moscow for Kaunas. The Council of Ministers was called into session, with President Smetona participating. Members of the delegation made Russia's demands known to the Council of Ministers. It was clear that Russia, the only major power in Europe at the time that was not involved in the war, was ready to take advantage of her favorable position to force Lithuania into submission.

The return of Vilnius was first discussed. Some of the Ministers doubted whether Lithuania should be content to accept only part of the Vilnius territory. Agreement was approved, however, on two principal grounds: (a) It was apparent that a refusal to accept Vilnius would not alter the Soviet insistence on army bases, while the failure to achieve the return of Vilnius would adversely affect the country's morale; (b) it was maintained that if it was impossible to prevent part of the Vilnius territory from falling into Bolshevik hands, it was the Lithuanian government's moral duty to save whatever it could.²⁹

With no assistance to be looked for from Germany, and in the face of the concentration of Soviet forces near Lithuania's borders, Lithuania had no alternative but to accept the Soviet demands. The delegates were instructed to seek the best possible terms.

The final meeting was held in the Kremlin on October 10. Even at this late stage in the negotiations, the Russians introduced modifications that were of considerable significance and were objectionable to Lithuania. The return of Vilnius and the mutual assistance provisions were merged into a single treaty, creating the impression that Lithuania had bargained for Vilnius by granting permission for Soviet bases in Lithuania. Lithuanian efforts to return to the two-treaty arrangement were unsuccessful. Furthermore, Soviet bases had previously been asked only for the duration of

the war, but Molotov now demanded a 20-year term for the assistance pact. The Lithuanian delegation protested against this change, and Molotov finally agreed to a 15-year period. He stated that Stalin himself had approved the changes, and that nothing else could be altered.

At 10 p.m. on October 10, Foreign Minister Urbšys, in the presence of Stalin, Voroshilov, Zhdanov and other members of the Soviet government, signed the mutual assistance pact. On the same day, Vilnius was returned to Lithuania.

On October 11 a banquet was given for the Lithuanian delegation. All the members of the Soviet ruling circle — Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Zhdanov and others — were present. Molotov and Stalin were the principal speakers at the banquet. Stalin, in what appeared to be a carefully prepared speech, reviewed Lithuania's history, touched upon Russo-Lithuanian relations with emphasis on the periods of cooperation between the two states, and expressed the wish that Lithuania might regain her former power. Both Molotov and Stalin emphasized once again that the troops to be stationed in Lithuania would not interfere in the country's internal affairs.³⁰ In answer to Stalin's speech, Foreign Minister Urbšys promised to uphold the agreements that had been concluded.

On October 13, Kaunas celebrated the return of Vilnius. And yet, in spite of twenty years of hoping, neither the press nor the people displayed

much enthusiasm. For who could rejoice at the return of a city — even Vilnius — when the very existence of the Lithuanian state was in danger? The ceding of the Klaipėda territory to Germany; Soviet penetration into Estonia and Latvia; the rape of Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland — all created uncertainties about Lithuania's future.

If the nonaggression treaty between Germany and Russia affected in some way the whole world, it was destined to be fatal to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. International law and morality fell before the combined strength of the two most powerful states in Europe, and with this collapse of the embodiment of the hopes of the 20th century, there fell too those states that had no alternative but to adhere to that system.

As has been indicated above, "the fate of Lithuania was decided without her participation in, or knowledge of, the decision. But even had she known about this secret deal at the time it was made, there was no chance that she could have escaped what had become, in view of the then existing political situation in Europe, inevitable."³¹ And one lives to lament the fact that in mid 20th century, when such efforts had been poured into achieving international law and equity through an institution that represented the greatest advance ever made in this direction, another extreme in the behavior of states was reached that clearly represented a regression to the ages of civilization in its crudest form.

NOTES

¹ F. W. Pick, "1939: The Evidence Re-Examined," *The Baltic Review*, 1:156, 1946.

² *Ibid.*

³ J. Kajeckas, "The Lithuanian Annexation," *The Baltic Review*, 1:214, 1946.

⁴ Pick, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

⁶ K. V. Grinius, *Lithuanian Bulletin*, 1:2, No. 6, August 25, 1943.

⁷ Speech of Halifax, quoted in Pick, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Grinius, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

¹⁰ J. A. Swettenham, *The Tragedy of the Baltic States*, p. 23.

¹¹ *Third Interim Report of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression*, p. 342.

¹² V. B. Mačiulika, *Lithuania*, p. 70.

¹³ *Third Interim Report of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression*, p. 311.

¹⁴ J. Audrūnas and P. Svyrius, *Lietuva Tironų Pančiūose*, p. 7.

¹⁵ Sven Auren, quoted in E. J. Harrison, *Lithuania's Fight for Freedom*, p. 23.

¹⁶ See Appendix.

¹⁷ Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

¹⁹ J. Audrūnas, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

²⁰ *The New York Times*, September 19, 1939, p. 5.

²¹ J. Audrūnas, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

²⁶ *Third Interim Report of the Select Committee on Communist Aggression*, pp. 315-316.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ S. Raštikis, *Kovose Dėl Lietuvos*, p. 611.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 615.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 623-624.

³¹ J. Šmulkštys, "The Annexation of Lithuania by the Soviet Union," *Lituanus*, No. 2, March, 1955.

A Glimpse Into Polish – Lithuanian Relations

by Dr. JUOZAS GIRNIUS

The article below has appeared recently in the well-known Polish magazine "Kultura", in Paris. It evoked a considerable echo in the Polish circles. Whatever the opinions, it was welcomed as a thoughtful and sober contribution to the Lithuanian-Polish dialogue in exile which is of great importance for the future East-Central Europe. One of the latest manifestations of that dialogue was this summer's Lithuanian-Polish culture festival behind the Iron Curtain during which the dreariness of the official Communist slogans was transcended by the genuine interest of both nations in each other's creative genius.

1. — International relations are usually considered to be a purely political matter, and at first glance the relation between Poland and Lithuania would not appear to lie within the competence of someone who is a philosopher rather than a political scientist. If I attempt to express myself upon the question, it is because I myself am convinced that men of politics are not the only ones who have a right to deal with it. The intercourse between our two nations has always comprehended much more than the merely political, and I believe that the treatment of Polish-Lithuanian relations on the level of pure politics will inevitably persist in being sterile. If a happier turn is to be effected in those relations, the ground for it will be prepared not by politicians, ruled as they are by nationalistic passions, but by those men of both nations who attempt to understand each other, to rise above the misunderstandings and conflicts of the recent past. In this conviction I accept, with sincere gratitude, the opportunity to review in a Polish cultural magazine the Lithuanian viewpoint on our relations.

I am not forgetting, of course, that Polish-Lithuanian relations require more than just a theoretical solution; this still does not mean, however, that they lie in the realm of pure politics. Between nations, as between individuals, relations are not above morality. And "pure politics" in particular tends to remain on the other side of morality and to be motivated by naked nationalistic egoism, selfishly considering only its own interests and disregarding the rights of others. And it is exactly this rejection of moral considerations that has caused pure politics to become synonymous with force and perfidy, rather than with peace and justice. It seems to me that the Poles and Lithuanians have experienced equally this meaning of pure politics translated into actu-

ality: In the name of political realism our nations have been sacrificed to the Bolshevik leviathan. Pure politics is equally shocking whether it reveals itself in undisguised cynicism or is hidden under noble principles and charters, for it is really always the same. The Second World War began with an act of dreadful cynicism—the Bolshevik-Nazi pact; it ended with equal cynicism, at the Yalta Conference. If the unofficial dealings at Yalta that have now been made public appeared to many as an impolite tactlessness, they only showed us, the victims of the conference, what a frightful beast lurks behind the mask of political realism. The tragic experience of the Second World War forces us, victims of this war, to remain forever horrified at pure politics, which in the name of political realism sacrifices moral principles for expedient compromises. Pure politics is essentially indifferent to morality, and it is therefore constantly open to cynical temptations. Although officially politics regards international peace as its goal, it actually corrupts international relations by disregarding justice. A merely political solution of a question usually leaves the question unsolved, since all such solutions are essentially dictated by the stronger to the weaker. Pure politics is always saturated with nationalistic egoism, and egoism separates nations just as much as it separates individuals in daily life. Instead of serving as a bridge between nations, pure politics rather keeps nations in perennial opposition. If there are any hopes for peace that go beyond the mere silencing of smaller nations by means of genocide, these hopes must lie beyond pure politics, beyond political realism, beyond nationalistic egoism. All humanistic movements in individual countries will remain ineffective if they do not move from national to international humanism. Speeches on man and humanity will remain hollow as long as entire na-

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tions are being destroyed at the same time as antigengicide conventions are being promulgated. There is no hope unless politics itself is humanized, unless "pure politics" (pure not in any purity of conscience, but in its prevention of any disturbance by the conscience of brutal egoism) is rejected.

This is true in principle, and this is true in our specific situation. There are questions that divide the Poles and the Lithuanians. These questions have their political side, and consequently their solution will demand political means — conferences, talks, treaties. But if true solutions are to be found, and not simply solutions dictated by force, a basic reciprocal understanding is necessary — and this is not just a political problem. A true reciprocal understanding is something more than a mere appraisal of the political "enemy." When a politician tries to "understand" his "enemy," all he has in mind is a knowledge of the enemy's weaknesses, a knowledge whose practical use is limited to war with that enemy. Reciprocal understanding is an entirely different thing; it means an effort to conciliate opposing interests through respect for the rights of both nations. Understood in this way, an "enemy" ceases to be an enemy and is transformed into a neighbor. Such an understanding of each other is needed by our two nations; it is the only way of establishing neighborly relations. It is necessary to institute in international relations the same liberality that has created in private relations a code of tolerance permitting men of differing convictions not to be mortal enemies. This personal tolerance once seemed utopian, as today the turning of international relations into the path of morality seems utopian. But even though the demand that the principles of humanity and liberality be made a part of international relations seems to be utopian, a belief in the possibility of realizing this Utopia is the only hope.

Guided by this conviction, I wish to share several thoughts that may assist an understanding of the Lithuanian viewpoint on relations with Poland.

2. — The differences between the Polish and Lithuanian viewpoints rise not only out of recent conflicts but out of the whole fabric of the historical relations between the two nations. From the time of Jagiello to the fateful year 1795, Poland's

and Lithuania's fortunes were so closely joined that it would seem this common historical past should have welded between the two nations an eternal bond of brotherly respect. If this did not happen, there were reasons for this. It is a fact that the bond of a common past was significant, for it joined the nations with many ties, and gave both nations a common claim to many people. But this historical bond was not as beneficial from the Lithuanian point of view as it might appear to the Poles. History has so disposed Polish-Lithuanian relations that two statements, seemingly diametrically opposed, are equally valid in characterizing them. On the one hand, it is possible to claim that throughout the period of common history the Lithuanians gave much to Poland and received nothing in return. On the other hand, it can be said that Poland had such an influence on Lithuania that it became a mortal threat to Lithuania's national existence. Both theses are justified, though they seem antiethical. I will now try to explain in brief my paradoxical characterization of Polish-Lithuanian relations in the past.

On the one hand, Lithuania gave Poland many men and received none from Poland. First, Poland was given the Jagiello dynasty, which closely allied the countries of Poland and Lithuania. If I am not mistaken, the Poles to this day refer to this dynasty with respect. But to the Lithuanians there is a certain ambivalence about the person of Jagiello himself. Jagiello's acceptance of the Polish crown was followed by internal strife with Vytautas, Grand Duke of Lithuania. To the Lithuanians it is Vytautas, not Jagiello, who is the symbol of the heroic epoch. And later men of Lithuanian blood went in a constant stream to the Poles and became assimilated into their culture — Radziwills, Tiskiewiczzes and others merged themselves into the Polish nation. And again, the Lithuanians consider that such names as Thaddeus Kosciuszko and Adam Mickiewicz belong to men of their blood. Finally, even in independent Poland, several Polish leaders were of Lithuanian descent. Lithuanians consider Narutowicz, first President of Poland, to have been of Lithuanian descent; his brother, S. Narutavičius, was one of the signatories of the Lithuanian declaration of independence. J. Pilsudski himself was closely associated with Lithuania and the Lithuanian people. I do not know whether my readers will be offended, and consider my claims "impertinent" and improper, when I say that Lithuanians consider these men to be of Lithuanian stock. It is not my intention, nor do I consider it useful, to engage in debate over how much of which nation's blood flows in their veins. Every one of these men, though of Lithuanian descent or at least in part of Lithuanian blood, merged into Polish culture and the Polish nation. And cultural identification with a nation bears more weight than ethnic origin. Therefore, as I have said, I would not consider a debate over "ownership" to have any practical meaning. If I have mentioned the point, it is only to show that



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the same names that are a matter of pride to the Poles represent lost sons to the Lithuanians. Furthermore, this relationship has been unilaterally favorable; if during the course of the two countries' common past there have been Lithuanians identified with Poland, there have been no Poles so identified with Lithuania's culture and nationhood. This is true in all spheres, from politics to poetry. There are no men in Lithuania's history to whom Poland could pose such pretensions of ownership as the Lithuanians claim for T. Kosciuszko or A. Mickiewicz. It is in this sense that I affirmed earlier that the Lithuanians, having given much to Poland, received nothing in return.

But this affirmation is no more than half the truth. If I were satisfied to stop with it, I might immediately be asked, "But did not Polish culture influence Lithuanian culture through all the years when the states of the two peoples were bound with close ties? It is not more to give a culture than to give individual men." This is the other side of Polish-Lithuanian relations. In fact, Polish culture deeply influenced Lithuanian culture. It would, of course, be naive to claim that the spread of Christianity to Lithuania through Poland was Lithuania's first contact with culture in general. When the Lithuanians accepted Christianity they already had a powerful state and a native culture. But it is undeniable that later, after the acceptance of Christianity and after contacts with the Polish state, the Lithuanians — and specifically their ruling circles — were fatefully influenced by Polish culture. Here, again, though, the Lithuanian view of the fact differs from the Polish view, Polish culture, instead of serving as a catalyst for the growth of a native culture, enslaved the Lithuanians. If it was said earlier that the Lithuanians received nothing from Poland, it would have to be said in this connection that the Lithuanians received too much from Poland. The Lithuanian ruling aristocracy, in absorbing Polish culture, began to merge into the Polish nation, to become completely Polandized. In spite of all the ethnic differences between the Poles and the Lithuanians, a strange type began to evolve in the Lithuanian ruling circles, a type described by the formula "*Gente lituanus, natione polonus*" — "Lithuanian in origin, Polish in nationality." The cultural ties with Poland became a tie with the Polish nation itself. The Poles are entitled to consider this process as a part of their cultural expansion and to vaunt it as their achievement. But to the Lithuanians this process — through Polish culture to Polish nationality — was a mortal threat to their national existence. And if the process had affected the whole nation, rather than just the ruling aristocracy and the clergy, the Lithuanian nation would already have died a quiet death. But though the perennial influence of Polish culture deprived Lithuania of her intelligentsia, the Lithuanian folk remained little touched. It was natural in these conditions that the reawakening of the national consciousness among the Lithuanian folk took the

form of a separation from Polish culture and the growth of a new intelligentsia uninfluenced by that culture. The Polish culture concentrated in manor and rectory was also socially in opposition to the Lithuanian peasantry, since it symbolized social oppression. Thus the national rebirth of Lithuanian intelligentsia, steeped in Polish culture, was in many cases not only indifferent to Lithuania's national rebirth but was actually opposed to it. By the same token, the new Lithuanian intelligentsia, having emerged from the peasantry, was opposed to Polandism, since Polandism was opposed to Lithuanianism.

3. — This one-sided — in its cultural aspect — development of Polish-Lithuanian relations was the cause of the paradoxical relations between the two nations even when, during the First World War, both nations began to re-establish themselves as independent states. The Poles had primarily in mind the common history, from Jagiello up to the revolts of 1831 and 1863. In the light of this historical perspective, it seemed to them natural that even now the two nations should join in creating a common state. To the Lithuanians, on the contrary, the memories of the epoch of common history stood as a warning that a national state is needed to preserve a national existence. If the idea of union appeared to the Poles as a brotherly gesture, it appeared to the Lithuanians rather as a treacherous threat to smother anew the reborn Lithuanian national consciousness. But, most important, this Lithuania was not the Lithuania the Poles preserved in their memories of history. Feudal Lithuania was a thing of the past; the manor, fallen under foreign influence, had become foreign to the Lithuanian nation. In place of a feudal Lithuania there had arisen a nation with a democratic consciousness, a nation resolved to follow its own destiny. In this situation, the dreaming about the common roads of the past that seemed to the Poles the extension of a brotherly welcome meant to the Lithuanians a threat to their very existence. In place of friendly relations, the two nations stood opposed in armed conflict. In the wars for independence Poland appeared to the Lithuanians as a mortal enemy. The Poles were the enemy who shed most of the blood of the Lithuanians who were defending their land and freedom. Of especially fateful consequence to the relations between the countries was General Zeligowski's march on Vilnius several days after the signing of the Treaty of Suwalki, breaking that treaty before its ink could dry. The means by which what had been achieved by force was later legalized appeared to Lithuanians as nothing more than the legalization of force itself. I don't know how the Poles look on General Zeligowski's march, but to Lithuanians it was nothing but a perfidious breaking of the Treaty of Suwalki, and it destroyed all respect for the Polish nation itself. I apologize if the reopening of this old wound is uncivil. But if the matter were passed over in silence, it could not be understood why, once the

guns were silent, the Lithuanians refused to maintain the usual diplomatic relations with Poland. Objectively, it is possible to wonder if such a refusal was politically correct. But to the Lithuanian nation it was the only possible way of registering a protest against a treacherously committed wrong. Because of this, Poland was separated from Lithuania until 1938 by a "little iron curtain."

Although the nations were so separated, news from the Vilnius territory filtered through to Lithuania. And it was not such news as to permit a change in emotions toward the southern neighbor. Especially when, after the establishment of a totalitarian regime in Poland, a malicious persecution of Lithuanians took place in the Vilnius territory. One after another, Lithuanian schools were closed; Lithuanian newspapers were maliciously censored and shackled through numerous measures; members of Lithuanian organizations became the objects of various forms of administrative harassment. Each item of such news that reached Lithuania filled Lithuanian hearts with new hatred toward the Poles, the occupiers of the Vilnius territory. What nation could remain indifferent to the persecution of its nationals? It is possible that Warsaw and Krakow were completely ignorant that this persecution existed; it may have gone unnoticed in Vilnius itself. It is common to all persecutions that they are carried out in silence. In any case, the persecutors have other, more "objective," names for their work and never call it persecution. Only the victims feel the persecutors' hands. To Lithuanians, Poland, having occupied the Vilnius territory, became the persecutor of their brothers in Vilnius.

4. — The Vilnius territory is the problem on whose solution depends the future of Polish-Lithuanian relations. As long as this question remains unsolved, there can be no hope for neighborly relations between Poland and Lithuania.

The problem of the Vilnius territory, like many other territorial problems, is not an uncomplicated one. Each nation has its own historical, juridical, statistical and other arguments. Unless there is good will, a solution will be hard to find.

Historically, there is no question that the territory of Vilnius has from antiquity belonged to Lithuania; furthermore, it was the very heart of the old Lithuanian state. The inhabitants of the Vilnius territory are not Polish; the original residents of the territory — except for the immigrants from Poland itself — were of Lithuanian and not Polish stock. Nevertheless, quite a few inhabitants of the Vilnius territory, though Lithuanian is their native tongue, have accepted the Polish language and thus have merged more or less consciously into the Polish nation. It is this that makes the question of Vilnius so complicated. Still, it is necessary at all times to remember the fundamental difference between Poland's and Lithuania's claims to Vilnius. When the Lithuanians proffer their claim to Vilnius, they base it on their

rights to territory that is historically theirs and whose people are of their stock. When Poles lay claim to the same territory and people, they base it on their rights to people whom they have won through their cultural expansion, and the territory these people occupy.

It is not the purpose of this article to suggest political solutions. May I be permitted, however, to express my lay opinion: The way to a just solution does not lie in absolute pretensions, but rather in a concrete determination of which nation has the better rights to parts of the territory. Perhaps a Lithuanian should agree, however painful it may be to him, that some areas of the territory have been permanently lost to Lithuania through the hopeless Polandization of their inhabitants. On the other hand, the Poles should realize that the Lithuanians cannot surrender those areas where Lithuanianism still lives even after years of an intensive Polandization campaign. When during the Second World War the Vilnius territory was returned to Lithuania, the falsity of the official statistics upon which, doubtless, Polish public opinion had been nourished became apparent. If those having Polish convictions were numerous in the towns, in the outlying villages, in many cases, the Lithuanian language and consciousness dominated. What reason could Poland have to desire those areas that have nothing to do with Polandism?

The city of Vilnius itself, as is usual with cities, was more multilingual and multinational. There were more immigrants from Poland there than anywhere else. But Vilnius — the capital city of Lithuania from antiquity! Can the Poles claim a city as dear to the Lithuanians as the heart? To the Lithuanian, every building in the city speaks of ancient deeds. Vilnius was Lithuania's cultural center not only in the historical past but up until the last years. The first Lithuanian daily was published there in 1905. In the same year the great Lithuanian Congress met there and promulgated the demands for autonomy and rallied Lithuanians for the wars of independence. The declaration of independence was made in Vilnius in 1918. The first Lithuanian Cabinet of Ministers began its work in Vilnius. Can the Poles desire this city for themselves? I do not consider this question an appeal to sentiment, I consider it an appeal to justice.

5. — Today the historical friendship of Poland and Lithuania is, sadly, filled with bitterness that often passes over into hatred. If both sides refuse to consider anything but the slogans of national egoism, there is no hope for normal neighborly relations. But there is no problem that cannot be solved, there are no wounds that cannot be healed by good will. Today both countries are again equally enslaved. (I do not consider significant the difference that Lithuania is directly enslaved and Poland indirectly enslaved by Bolshevism.) As after the revolts of 1831 and 1863, the substantial part of the intelligentsia of both nations is again



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1875 - 1911

DRAWING BY A MARCIULIONIS

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together in exile. Being thus detached, we have an opportunity to consider our relations more calmly, less under the influence of passion. We are suffering equally from pure politics, which betrayed our nations. The longing for freedom among people of both nations might be caught up into the general longing for a new spirit in international relations. Burning with the longing for freedom for ourselves, we cannot plan slavery for others; desiring justice for ourselves, we cannot ignore the rights of others. Suffering as we are as a result of the egoism of the great powers, we cannot become like those who wish to preserve for themselves the privilege of fanaticism while demanding tolerance from others.

No matter how deeply Polish-Lithuanian relations are bogged down in mutual mistrust, one must have hope that with good will it will be possible to break through. The permission granted by the editors of this magazine for the presentation of Lithuanian opinions in these pages is a gesture of good will. The editors may, because of

this gesture, receive many complaints from the one side, as the Lithuanian author will from the other. In fact, the public opinion of both nations is so oriented toward the "enemy" that there is no desire even to talk. There is no hope that politicians will dispel this mood. It is possible that the Poles would consider it treasonable not to cry "Poland with Vilnius and Lvov." But if one side raises such a cry, it can say little to the other side. Thus we remain without a common ground or any of the intercourse that is normal between neighboring nations. The task of the intelligentsia of both nations is to seek a common language, even if a certain amount of bitterness is unavoidable. Then, when the people of the two nations come to a deeper understanding, there will be hope that even the political differences will be justly settled. The road to true independence for our nations is a hard one; the road to a settlement of our differences is equally hard. But this road will never be found if it is not searched for with good will.

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THE FIRST ABSTRACT PAINTER OF MODERN TIMES

By
ALEKSIS RANNIT

Baltic art is little known in the Western world. The tragic fate of our peoples and their remoteness from Paris have had a great deal to do with this. From the cultural-historical point of view, the physiognomy of the right shore of the Baltic Sea has so far been little studied and inadequately described. So the spiritual and artistic achievements of our countries remain, in spite of their richness, unfamiliar to the world at large. I would like to draw attention to two artists now working in Paris, who will serve as living examples of the high artistic culture of the Baltic peoples. They are the Estonian graphic artist Eduard Viiralt and the Lithuanian landscape painter Adomas Galdikas. About Viiralt — whose art, I may say, remains unequalled in purity in modern Europe¹ — Raymond Cogniat says that he is an accomplished master in the sphere of graphic art,² while Pierre Mornand emphasizes that in Viiralt's creative work an attempt is expressed to achieve a simple classical perfection,³ that he "possesses the absolute purity of an Ingres, improved by the humanizing conception of a Chassériau" and that "his genius will continue to unfold steadily, will find a new means of expression that will once again evoke astonishment."⁴ Andre Salmon says, "Viiralt must forgive our century the pitiful bunglings of pseudo-masters of graphic art. What other graphic artist of our time has developed to the highest perfection such an absolute harmony between drawing and color scheme?"⁵ And when we turn to another artist of the Baltic area, the Lithuanian painter Adomas Galdikas, we are in complete agreement with Waldemar George that he is "an artist of European rank."⁶ Waldemar George characterizes the work of Galdikas accurately when he says, "The life-giving faith, the capacity to see God's principle in nature and to understand it, leads the painter to a revelation of the atmosphere of Lithuania, permeated with mystery."⁷

The theme of my essay is precisely a painter who proceeds from a mystical and cosmical perception of the landscape; his name is Čiurlionis, and his work is one of the most significant mani-

festations of the art of the North European countries. Čiurlionis was a Lithuanian, and in order to understand him one must know a little about his native land and about the Lithuanian soul. The flat land stretches out endlessly, competing with the sky. Plowland and meadow follow one another in broad expanses. In this majestic flow of fields, hills and forests everything is unity, and there is a cosmic fullness. In this landscape a man becomes conscious of his minuteness and his helplessness. Eternity, still and exalted, watches him and draws him away from the earth. Here freedom is not power but renunciation, a giving up of things. The thirst for immortality, a yearning for the supernatural, is the continuing source of strength in the life and culture of the Lithuanian man. The visionary nature of the landscape, with its peculiar qualities of light, leads a Lithuanian outward over the horizon of the world into the infinite, into the purlieu of the supernatural.

It was Čiurlionis, a son of this landscape, who fully discovered the cosmic Lithuanian soul, a soul that desires no conflict between the material and immaterial worlds or between man and nature. Čiurlionis sought for neither the type of the race nor that of the Godhead but for the absolute, the all-uniting aboriginal essence of things. His eye was attuned to eternity and not to form. His love

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THE SPRING SONATA (SCHERZO)

for the All, the totality of things, was of a strength hardly known before in the North.

Mykolas Konstantas Ciurlionis was born on Sept. 10, 1875, in Varena, Lithuania, and was only 35 when he died on March 28, 1911, in Czerwony Dwor, near Warsaw. He belongs to those elect to whom — as to those beloved of the gods, those, whom Dionysus has possessed — only a brief time is given to record, in a few creative works, the brilliance and the suffering of their souls. In its external aspects, his fate resembles Van Gogh's;

he, too, had only six years to complete his life's work in painting before his mind was seized by the night of insanity and death. As a youthful prodigy he was dedicated to a musical career. He graduated from Warsaw Conservatory and wrote a number of significant compositions, of which such symphonic works as "The Forest" and "The Sea" deserve special mention.

Ciurlionis was already suffering from deep spiritual depression as he entered his 30th year; disillusioned with his musical work, he decided to

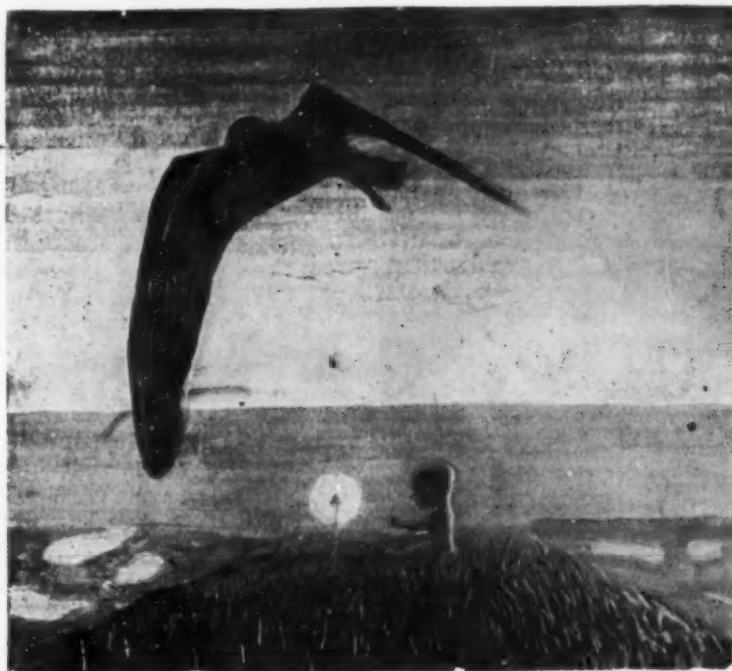
devote himself to painting. Now the pictorial-musical elements in him were spiritualized into a soulful experience of matter. He attended the Warsaw Art School, but only briefly, since he soon realized that what he wanted to express could not be acquired by learning. He cut short his studies, and remained a self-taught man of genius. Ciurlionis wanted to paint music, but he did not see the meaning and purpose of painting in a sensory-musical expression of the colors, nor was the mystical life of pure color, though it is present in his art, of any greater satisfaction to him. He was searching for a complete synthesis of time and space in painting — that is, for something "impossible." Trained as a musical scholar and a composer, Ciurlionis created his own world of a fantastic sort and constructed his art in purely contrapuntal fashion, as a series of symphonic statements. Thus arose his symbolic serial compositions "The Sea Sonata," "The Spring Sonata," "The Sun Sonata," "The Sonata of Pyramids" and "The Serpent Sonata," in which each work has its own musical characterization, such as allegro, andante, scherzo, finale, etc. There are also the cyclical works, such as "Creation of the World," "Cycle of Animal Life," "The Fairy Tale" and "Fantasy (Prelude, Fugue and Finale)," as well as several isolated, self-contained works.

Only a few of the Lithuanian painter-composer's works are free-flowing compositions, presenting a delicate lyricism of feeling, a sublime spiritualization of directly perceived impressions of nature. In general, these are forms that, masterfully transformed into poetry, acquire a sym-

bolic significance in which a most profoundly Lithuanian feeling for nature, stemming from mystical sources, finds its expression. Above all, however, Ciurlionis joined to the beauty of symbolic influences in the abstract style that he had achieved something new — a sensitivity for the secret of cosmic Being and fate, for the merciless invisible powers that ruled him, a sensitivity that arose from metaphysical experience. Timeless figures and abstract forms of transcendental beings, emerging from the depths, step upon the silvery-gray ground. These forms, individually clearly delineated, seem to wish to intensify the penetrating force of spiritual reflection, to make themselves grow through contrapuntal and other "musical-geometrical" repetition in rhythms that resemble one another, and then to purify themselves again into calm harmonies, until the whole canvas seems filled with continuous correspondences of harmonious elements of form.

Ciurlionis worked exclusively in tempera; since he was too poor to buy good paints, he had to make do with cheap, inferior paints. The tragic consequence is that today, 50 years after his works were created, they have already lost half their silken color quality. The works gathered in the Ciurlionis Gallery in Kaunas are steadily fading; they are "dying away" before they have become known to the world. Outstanding Russian art critics and poets have interested themselves in Ciurlionis' creative work. Among them may be mentioned Vyacheslav Ivanov, Sergei Makovsky, Nikolai Vorobyov, Chdovsky, Lydie Krestkovsky and Lehman. In 1939 Romain Rolland, a great ad-

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FROM "THE FAIRY TALE"



THE ARCHER

THE VIRGIN

THE BULL



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SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC

mirer of Ciurlionis' art (as he says in a letter to the Russian art critic Vorobyov), desired to come to Lithuania to write a book about the artist. This would have given the marvellous painter a worldwide audience; however, the war prevented the project. It is to be feared that Ciurlionis will remain merely a legend on the fringe of the history of art.

To consider Ciurlionis a phenomenon of the past, however, would be to do an injustice to his original personality, as well as to the history of art. As the first abstract painter, as the creator of the peculiar sonata form in painting and as symbolist and surrealist, he belongs among the most interesting phenomena of modern painting.

Odilon Redon once called himself "the symphonic painter." This title is an original definition, but so far as this master's creative work is

concerned it is a purely literary one that seems to lack any profound substantiation from a scholarly point of view. As against the claims of this French painter, and the Impressionists as well, it would seem to be Ciurlionis alone so far who is entitled to be called a "musical painter." This name was justly given to him by Lydie Krestovskiy in her book "La laideur dans l'art" (Ugliness in Art).⁷

"For Ciurlionis, music formed the metaphysical substratum of the universe," Nikolai Vorobyov wrote. "Ciurlionis attempts to dynamize the picture by analogies to the means employed in music. Rhythmically graduated forms and groups of forms suggest the impressions of music. The tempos and the dynamic values are made visible either through a variety of playfully interwoven motifs, which are organized in zig-zags and which climb and

Villeneuve (Vaud) Villa Olga
April 10, 1930

Dear Mrs. Čiurlionis,

"... It is now already fifteen years since I accidentally came upon Čiurlionis (in the pages of a Russian magazine which, I think, was called "Apollon") and was literally stunned.

"Since then I never stopped, even during the war, to look for ways to get better acquainted with him. It was not easy. Yet I succeeded in acquiring two books which had reproductions of his works...

"Words are powerless to express how much I have been affected by this genuinely magic art which managed to enrich not only painting, but man's vision in polyphony (counterpoints and fugues) and the rhythms of music as well. To what developments this fruitful invention could lead in wide space painting, in monumental frescoes! It is a new continent of the spirit and Čiurlionis is its Christopher Columbus.

"One of the characteristic features which astonished me in the composition of many of his paintings, is a view that opens itself toward endless plains from the top of some tower or a dizzyingly high walls. I ask myself: what could have given birth to these impressions in a land like yours which, to my mind, has not supplied him with any motives of height. I

imagine that it was the painter himself who experienced such intoxicating dizziness and that feeling of soaring flight which overtakes one before falling asleep...

"I cannot thank you enough for the opportunity you have given me to acquaint myself at last with his music... In my opinion the most original works are the 7 Preludes and the Fugue. One can feel in them the flow of atmosphere in forests and plains. I desire to hear some day his Symphonic poem "The Sea"...

ROMAIN ROLLAND

"P. S. . . . Stravinsky has also spoken well to me about the works of Čiurlionis. He said he had one of his paintings...

"I am still hopeful that some day I will have the opportunity to see your ancient Lithuania, the name of which always implies to me so many mysteries. I extend my fervent sympathy to the heroic land-tillers' nation that was able to preserve, wars and centuries-long suffering notwithstanding, its free spirit and its sonorous and highly developed language."

fall diagonally (allegro, scherzo), or through drawn-out horizontal lines and large, calm surfaces (andante). The melody may be represented through the swinging sweep of a line, the tone and the modulation through the general tone color and through the deviations from it." As far as the musicality of the color is concerned, Čiurlionis sought for it least of all. As I have already pointed out, he constructed his works in purely contrapuntal fashion, as a series of symphonic statements; for this reason I permit myself to call him a true "symphonic painter," a musical scholar who mastered the medium of painting and created a form of painted sonata and painted fugue — a form that gave plastic, linear and color expressions to musical impressions and that arrived at a set of musical-geometrical laws. In Čiurlionis there is the poetry of powerful, exalted, demonic arts, the poetry of tempests, of sea storms. The central role, however, is always played by the concept of a specific rhythmical-musical arrangement. Here is realized for the first time in the history of art the symphonic concept in painting.

The artist wishes to free himself finally from all elements of contradiction, in order to convey his spiritual experience, as in music, purely by means of art — that is, through a specific sequence of manifestations of the movement of forms. The artist ecstatically dissolves himself in the totality of the universe, submerges himself in the act of creation. It is an ecstasy simultaneously

of the ear and the eye, in which we become exalted; it is a state of dream, a moment of lethargy, a spirituality unequalled in art.

What is presented in Čiurlionis' paintings has little or nothing to do with experience (tradition); that which is perceived becomes an object not through a sensual awareness of a thing but through an act of the imagination, and its natural essence, striving toward unity, is formulated as a mystery. Here, therefore, the ideas of a rigorous musician and those of a mystic coalesce, since what is formed here is the essence not of an object but of a perception.

The essential things that have up to now been said about Čiurlionis have come from Vyacheslav Ivanov, the important Russian philosopher and poet who died as an exile in Italy in 1949. In his study "Čiurlionis and the Synthesis of Arts" this high-ranking man of letters wrote:

The work of Čiurlionis achieves an exalted meaning for the history of future art through its cosmic and transcendental fulfillment of things. For we cannot fail to note that the pathos of this artist is not a pathos of dream and illusion. It is a profession of faith in an objective world-view; it is at the same time a confession of the inner spectacle, a declaration about those spiritual tensions of human beings that Dante has called *spiriti del viso*.

We have arrived at the boundary over which Čiurlionis passes into the world of the abstract.



M. K. CIURLIONIS

THE SONATA OF STARS

Kandinsky, who used to be among us in Estonia, teaching law at Tartu University, painted his first abstract painting in 1911. Kandinsky first became acquainted with the work of Čiurlionis through the magazine *Apollon*, which in 1911 reproduced a series of works by the Lithuanian painter, together with an evaluation by the famous critic Sergei Makovsky. Later he saw and was profoundly impressed by the great memorial exhibition of Čiurlionis' paintings in Moscow. I repeat that Kandinsky painted his first abstract picture in 1911; by 1904, however, Čiurlionis had already painted pictures that today must be considered abstract or semiabstract.

It was in this and the following year that the Lithuanian painter created the great cycle (14 pictures in all) entitled "Creation of the World." In these works objects lose their compulsive reality and a dreamlike reflection of the inner life comes to the fore. It is the mystique of the Cosmos, and not of the individual, that is given us here. Čiurlionis paints the spiritual element of the creation of the world. He thinks of the identity of the infinite and tries to show visually how everything that is separate has been in this process a consequence of the whole. We emerge from the chaos of primeval darkness to greet the ecstatic flowering of nature. The forms of the cycles "Summer" and "Winter," both painted in 1907, are even barer; they can be regarded as classical examples of abstract art. "In 'Winter,'" N. Vorobyov writes, "a profound immersion in the peculiar manifestations of light of the Northern winter nights, in the magical mood of a world of snow bathed in the d'm light of the moon, is linked with the play of abstract forms and irrational outlines of the external world, as was later attempted in similar fashion by Paul Klee and Kandinsky... The present acquires multiple meanings: one and the same form appears simultaneously as star, flower, flame and snowflake."¹⁰ In his important "Sonatas," Čiurlionis also represented the unifying force in nature, which often exists beyond any material details. This can be seen most clearly in "The Sonata of Stars." But, in contrast to his follower Kandinsky, Čiurlionis does not struggle against nature; quite contrary: In his love for her he establishes the pure, the abstract character of her forms, her metaphysical "nakedness"; he constantly transmits an experience of objects that is full of symbolism, as well as being a metamorphosis of phenomena.

As I have already mentioned, Čiurlionis was self-taught. Moreover, he was totally unfamiliar with modern French art. It was a fateful hour of history that linked him with the other renewers of art. At that time he, too, had created works that (to play with the terminology of cubism) aspire to the perfection of the crystal. Consider, for instance, works like the andante of "The Sun Sonata" (1907) and the andante of "The Serpent Sonata" (1908), which appear to us as geometrical

compositions that were extraordinarily bold for their time.

Čiurlionis, as the founder of the abstract form, as a painter-musician and as an artist who renounced the old dimensions and who solved the formal problems of composition, is an astonishing phenomenon. But it is his innermost expression rather than his formalistic daring that makes him a great painter. He demonstrates to us that the highest quality of a work of art is its content, its spiritual substance — a metaphysical essence, a mystical ingredient of existence, something life-spending. Every object becomes for him the expression of his secret will. Every form is conditioned by the personal will, which restlessly destroys itself in everlasting labor. In his work we constantly meet this whole torment of dissatisfied search. Everywhere is hope and struggle, everywhere yearning, everywhere the great question and nowhere the answer, everywhere the struggle of the living and nowhere the final aim, the end. The principle of creation is constantly turned into a tragic principle. For Čiurlionis the whole of nature is the *fata morgana* of some god, and he paints the god's power as a visionary, sensual idea. In this divine-demonic Cosmos man plays at best a rather insignificant role — he is open to the caprice of nature. The "Serpent Sonata" andante conceals an experience of shock, of worldwide fear, of horror. Man stands at the brink of the abyss, filled with yearning for the far-off light. Salvation is impossible. The serpent — the catastrophe of the spirit — will overpower him. This picture and Picasso's "Guernica" are the most shattering documents of our time, presenting the whole situation of modern man to us with astounding force.

NOTES

- ¹ See my article about the artist in the magazine *Das Kunstwerk*, No. 5, 1950.
- ² Raymond Cogniat, "Eduard Viiralt," *Arts*, Edition Georges Wildenstein, 1949.
- ³ Pierre Mornand, "Eduard Viiralt," in the book *Trente artistes du livre*, Paris: Edition Marval, 1945.
- ⁴ Quoted after Nesto Jacometti *Tetes de Montparnasse*, Paris: Edition Oreste Zeluk, 1934.
- ⁵ Waldemar George, *Gaidikas—Tragique Lituanie*, Editions Arts et Lettres, 1931.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁷ Lydie Krestovsky, *La laideur dans l'art*, Paris: Edition du Seuil, 1947.
- ⁸ Nikolai Vorobyov, *M. K. Čiurlionis, Litauischer Maler und Musiker*, Kaunas: Pribačis Publishing House, 1938.
- ⁹ Vyacheslav Ivanov, "Čiurlionis und die Synthese der Kuenste" in the book *Borozdy i meshi. Opyty esteticheskija i kriticheskija*, Moscow: Mussaget Publishing House, 1916.
- ¹⁰ Nikolai Vorobyov, *op. cit.*

(This article is based on the lecture presented at the II International UNESCO Congress of the art critics in Paris)

ANTANAS VAIČIULAITIS

A LYRIC ARTIST



The writings of Antanas Vaičiulaitis, one of the most illustrious Lithuanian "hommes des lettres," reflect an interesting synthesis. They contain the Lithuanian scene and world feeling, as unique and unmistakable as the rind of a birch or a song against the evening sky. But their style is polished by exhaustive study of many Western literatures and shows a lucidity that is unmistakably Gallic.

His is a generation which grew up in independent Lithuania after World War I. He is also one of the several Lithuanian writers who, between the wars, established organic and deep-seated bounds with Western cultural heritage. The comparative method in the history of culture, comparative literature, have always remained his favorites.

The first story of Vaičiulaitis was published 29 years ago. Today he has an impressive list of titles to show: Fiction: *VAKARAS SARGO NAMELY* (An Evening in the Watchman's Hut) 1932; *VIDUDIENIS KAIMO SMUKLĖJ* (Noon in a Village Tavern) 1933; *VALENTINA* 1936; *MŪSŲ MAŽOJI SESUO* (Our Little Sister) 1936; *PELKŲ*

TAKAS (A Path in the Swamp) 1939; *KUR BAKŪŽĖ SAMANOTA* (Where Is the Moss-covered Cottage) 1947. Travelogues: *NUO SIRAKŪŽŲ LIGI ŠIAURĖS ELNIO* (From Syracuse to the Reindeer) 1937; *ITALIJOS VAIZDAI* (The Pictures of Italy) 1949. Criticism: *NATŪRALIZMAS IR LIETUVIŲ LITERATŪRA* (Naturalism and Lithuanian Literature); *LIETUVIŲ LITERATŪROS APŽVALGA* (A Survey of Lithuanian Literature). Translations: *POEMS*, MIGUEL MANARA by Oscar Milosz; *THE MAN WHO WEIGHED SOULS* by Andre Maurois; *THE LIFE OF JESUS* by Francois Mauriac, etc. In addition to all this, Vaičiulaitis has written innumerable book reviews, a score of poems and is working on a play. His prestige in the Lithuanian literary world is reflected by the fact that he had been awarded three literary prizes. Translations of his works have brought him to the English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Finnish, Estonian, Latvian and a few other audiences.

Vaičiulaitis' style is distinguished by its plastic quality. His word is exact, daring, concrete. The verbs, in particular, dance, leap and quiver. His eye

is especially enamored of the detail, the microscopic. His ear is sensitive to all shadings of sound. The pattern of his prose is rich with atmosphere and associations.

While the majority of Vaičiulaitis' contemporaries focused their attention on the ethnographic moment, the social struggle, or the conflict between city and country, his main concern was creating character. Concrete reality, although sharply observed and registered, is of secondary importance to him. Therefore a step into fantasy comes quite naturally to Vaičiulaitis.

The preoccupation with character in Vaičiulaitis' writings stops short of the dramatic approach. The author remains constantly faithful to Apollo and the rumblings of Dionysiac struggle remain distant and sporadic. He is mainly a lyric story-teller, who treats his people with a smile and gentle humor. The tone of his later stories, perhaps due to the long exile, is growing more elegiac, but it is far from being dark.

J. Z.

THE GOLDEN SLIPPER

ANTANAS VAIČIULAITIS

Once upon a time there were three brothers who went out to sea to cast their fish nets. When they were far from shore a violent storm broke out. The wind roared and blew so hard that the gulls were almost beaten down on the surface of the water. They were so frightened that they sought refuge on the sides of the boat. The waves rose higher and higher. More and more the storm ran riot, carrying the helpless craft along with it. Finally after many weary hours, the fishermen rejoiced to see the shore, a sharp and rocky cliff atop which they saw a maiden seated.

What is she doing here?" asked the astonished men. "In the midst of the winds and storm, at the edge of a raging sea?"

The youngest said, "I am going to ask her what she is waiting for."

But the others rebuked him and tried to dissuade him.

"Do you not see that the slope is very steep? A falcon could not fly over it, nor could a squirrel climb up. Why attempt the impossible?"

Nevertheless the youth did not heed his brothers' advice and leaped toward the edge of the cliff, which was so high that one almost had to turn one's head upside down to see the top.

The young fisherman clung to the rocks and climbed higher and higher. The wind blew so fiercely that the birds, blown from the sea, struck themselves against the sides of the cliff and fell dead in the foaming whirlpools below. But the young man hung onto the jutting rocks and climbed from one to another. He felt pain in his hands and feet, but the peak was already near at hand and across the tempest he heard the maiden sobbing bitterly. Below in the deep, the boat floated like a little shaving and his brothers appeared scarcely larger than needles.

The youth made a last leap and found himself at the side of the beautiful stranger.

"Why are you crying?" he asked her.

"I was walking in my garden when a sorcerer appeared. He seized me and carried me to this rock; then he threw my golden slipper into the sea. How can I return with a bare foot? The entire city would mock me, for my father is the king and my mother the queen. The servants would point their fingers at me and make fun of me." And the princess, in thinking of her golden slipper, abandoned herself to sobs while her shoulders shook convulsively.

The fisherman said to her: "Where did the slipper fall? I will retrieve it from the water."

"Do you see that reef?" she pointed. "The reef near the dashing whirlpools of water? It is there that

the sorcerer has thrown my golden slipper. How it glittered in the sun as it fell!"

The young man descended to rejoin his brothers and they rowed toward the little island. There they waited three days and three nights in their boat, but could find nothing. Yet when the fourth morning came they saw something that shimmered at the bottom of the sea.

The youngest dived into the water. There the fish looked at him with goggly eyes, wiggling their tails and gaping as if waiting to swallow him. But the young man was brave and dived without fear until he felt the floor of the sea underfoot. Little sea animals were pushing the golden slipper around with their noses. The young fisherman seized it and returned to the surface.

The brothers rowed him to the shore and he began to ascend but this time without feeling the least pain in either his hands or feet.

When the princess saw him, she began to smile and allowed him to place the shoe on her foot. While fitting it, he did not stop admiring her beauty. He did not hurry and when he was finished he was not anxious to return to his brothers.

"Come down, come down! The storm is over; we have cast our nets and, when we have fish enough, we can go home untroubled," they cried to him.

But the princess arose moaning: "Something has happened to my leg. How unfortunate! Could you help me as far as the city?"

"I will carry you," he answered.

She rewarded him with a happy smile.

Turning toward his brothers he called to them: "Row home to our parents and tell them their youngest son is carrying a princess to the city. If he is delayed in coming home, a little bird will fly there and perch near the window. If the messenger has a little branch of linden in his beak, that will tell them that their son is happy. If he is not happy, the bird will carry a branch of nettles, and if he is no more of this world, the bird will bear a needle of spruce."

He picked the princess up in his arms and carried her away across the dunes. The maiden rested her head on his shoulder, her lovely hair caressing his face.

The day waned, nevertheless they saw no travelers, passed no hamlets, so far had the evil sorcerer carried her. Night fell. They stopped in the middle of a forest before a small abandoned hut. The young fisherman made a bed of leaves and put moss in place of down. He went into the thicket, picked fruit and gave it to the princess. When the light of day



M. K. CIURLIONIS

THE SEA SONATA

was completely extinguished, when the stars came out, the princess retired on the moss and her dreams were full of golden slippers.

But the young man could not sleep. He sat outside near the door and told himself that the princess was truly beautiful.

Then the beasts of the forest, awakening from their sleep, one after the other assembled around the little cottage. The squirrel came first hopping from branch to branch. Then came the marten running be-

side a wolf. Ending the procession was a bear advancing waveringly. There was also a ferret and a deer, in short, a marvelous multitude of inhabitants of the forest.

All of them surrounded the hut and greeted the fisherman: "We were sound asleep and we have dreamed that a princess has come through forest and thicket. We wish to see her."

"No, she is sleeping now and you should not wake her," he answered.

The animals beseeched him: "At least tell us if she is as beautiful as they say."

"Ah, big and little animals, she is so beautiful that the fish of the sea frisk to the shore when they see her; the eagle, high in the sky, pauses and listens to her voice when she speaks; and when she touches you, the most serious wounds cease to cause you pain."

The squirrel spoke up: "While leaping in the fir trees, I pricked my nose and I'm suffering terribly."

The bear growled: "Your little nose will heal up. Such a hurt has no need of being touched, but I, oh how happy I would be just to look at her."

The fisherman pitied these poor animals. He opened the door a little and permitted them all, one after the other, to look at the princess.

The animals approached the hut on tiptoe. They shook their heads and clucked their tongues in wonder at seeing her hair as bright and shining as the rays of the sun. After that, all, the bear as well as the deer, lay down around the little cottage to watch over the princess. When the sun came up, they went into the forest. One came back with nuts, another with combs of honey, another with roots, and since they believed she might be afraid, they hid behind the bushes and trees and watched through the branches for the time when she arose from sleep.

On awakening the princess spoke: "I have been dreaming that I slept in the castle of my father and that a hundred soldiers stood guard over me."

The fisherman replied: "They were not soldiers, but all the animals of the forest that guarded you last night."

As he spoke, the wolf and the marten, the squirrel and the deer, the big as well as the little, all the children of the forest, came out of their hiding places. Very discretely they appeared; too shy to approach closer they marvelled from afar and nudged each other saying: "Look, she eats the nut I gathered, the honey I found, the berries that I picked."

The bear said to her: "Mount my back, princess, I wish to carry you to the city."

She got on his back and clung to his fur and put her feet in the golden slippers against his ears.

So they began their journey through thicket and heather. The fisherman came on beside the princess. The squirrel leaped ahead and the wolf and marten formed the rear guard. Only the deer disturbed the order of procession. Overcome with joy, it could not contain itself and leaped unceasingly over raspberry bush and under hazelnut trees, while the grouse, balanced on branches, turned their necks, as if asking: "What passes here?"

Toward evening, they entered open country and saw a tower in the distance.

The bear let the princess down from his shoulders, saying: "We are afraid of the soldiers and their guns; we will go no further."

All the animals returned to the forest to hide in their dens.

The princess and the fisherman went on to the city and, thanks to her golden slippers, the people

recognized her. They threw their hats into the air and acclaimed her so loudly that the roofs shook.

And when the king heard the news, he mounted his white steed and had a coach follow him to bring his daughter home. Everybody sang from dusk to dawn without forgetting to eat and drink, bringing out casks of mead from the wine-cellars of the monarch.

The fisherman was seated in a place of honor and when the feast was at an end, the king called him and said: "I will give you a bag of gold, so that you will return home a rich man with shining boots and ermine coat. You will not have to work any more and you will be able to lie in bed late and drink good wine."

"Your gold and treasures are of little importance to me if I must leave. Give me work to do and I will be happy at your court."

The king employed him as gardener. He pruned the trees, dug the ground and that year the apple blossoms were so fragrant that they put to shame all those of former springs. The princess liked nothing better than to walk among the trees.

One day the fisherman said to her: "When you come here among the jasmine and the cherry trees, all the bees hum more sweetly."

And he spoke of the sea, the golden slipper and the animals of the forest.

But the king stopped their meetings under the blossoming fruit trees. He sent the young man to the stables to care for the many royal chargers. Then the coats of the chargers became bright. The young man curried the prancing horses until they shone. The princess took great pleasure in her carriage.

The young fisherman, while hitching up her chestnut horses, said gallantly: "I hope you are more comfortable in the carriage than on the back of the bear."

Then the king gave him orders to mount the top of the tower to see if the enemy was coming. Seven days and seven nights he watched there. At the dawn of the eighth day, he saw a troop of knights approaching the city. At their head rode a man with a red cloak and golden crown. His armour shone so in the sun as to dazzle the eyes of all.

The fisherman told the king: "I have seen a troop of knights. Is this the enemy?"

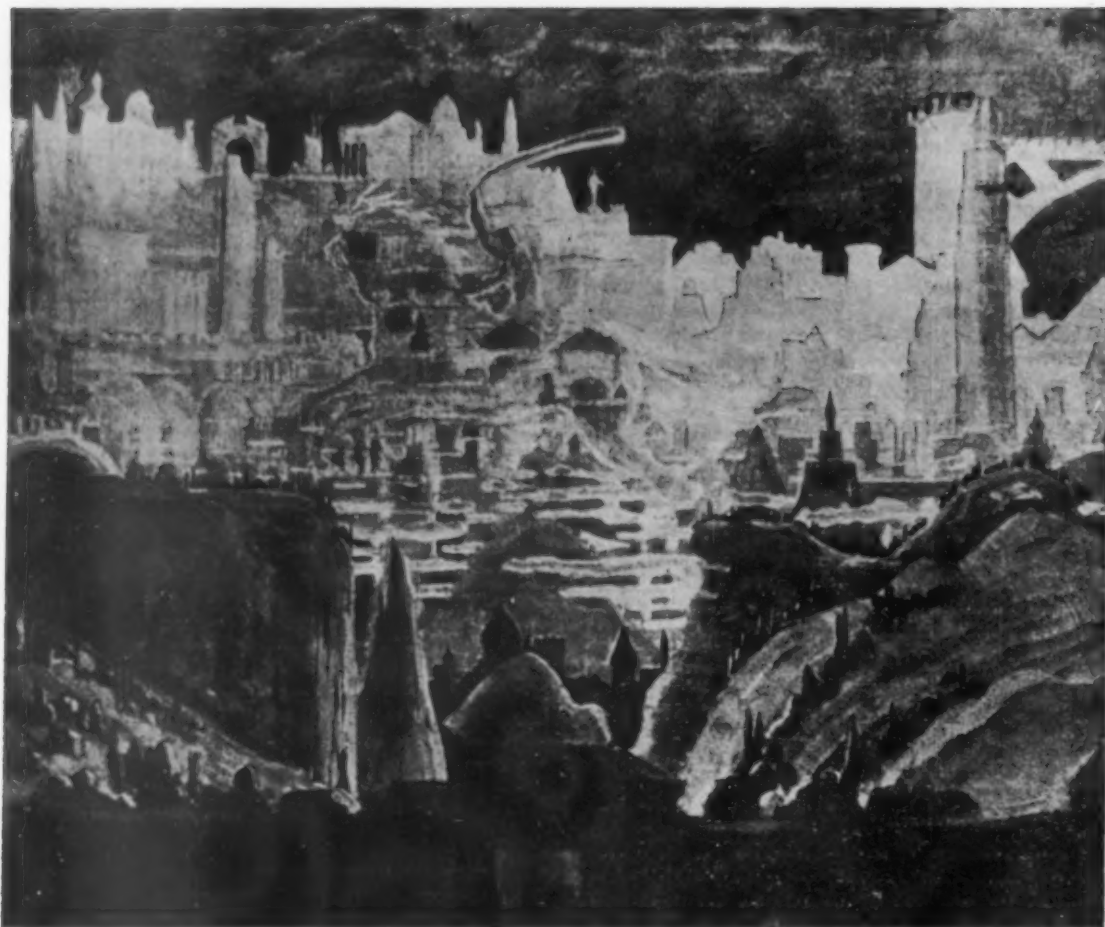
"No," said the king. "It is my neighbor who comes to ask the hand of my daughter."

The poor fisherman went to the garden and walked among the blooming pear trees. He saw the princess coming to him.

He spoke to her: "I have found you beautiful and neither the waves of the sea, nor its black depths have frightened me. I mounted the sharp edges of the cliff and left my parents and brothers and carried you in my arms through the forest and protected you against the wild animals and permitted them to serve you."

She was silent.

He spoke again: "What must I do to have you speak? Must I bring you a bird that sings differently? Must I go to the isle of the far seas to shear the sheep with the golden fleece?"



M. K. CIURLIONIS

THE KNIGHT

She did not answer. She listened to the trumpets which sounded at the city gate. Then she returned to the castle. The sad, young fisherman sat down by the fountain. Later he walked into the orchard and bade goodby to the blossoming trees. Then he made his way to the stables to bid farewell to the chestnut horses.

He began his journey across fields and through swamps. The brambles tore his coat. The pebbles wounded his feet. The birds fluttered around and asked him why he looked so unhappy. In the forest, the bear looked at him with surprise and the squirrel was at a loss as to what to think, finally deciding to stand on his hind legs with his tail raised in a question mark.

The youth travelled on until he came to the seashore, where he remained all day and all night. When the morn came, it was stormy. The waves were high,

leaping like wild steeds, casting their white foam against the rocky shore.

The gaze of the young fisherman followed the swirling sea until, suddenly, he caught a fleeting glimpse of a golden slipper gleaming at the bottom.

He leaped over the boulders into the waves and dived down and down, farther and farther. A little bird, a swallow, darted out. It circled bravely above the waters, breasting the gale over the spot where he had gone down.

It flew over the forest, stopping to pluck a needle from the spruce tree. When it reached the home of the young fisherman, it perched on the hedge near the window and waited. The brothers passed-by and did not see it, the father saw it and did not understand, but when the mother, seated at her spinning wheel, saw the swallow with the green needle in its beak, she wept bitterly.

(Translated by Kate Pendleton)

CREATIVE WRITING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND ITS DIFFICULTIES

By KOSTAS ASTRAUSKAS

Many an exiled writer, living within a culture comparatively new to him, is tempted to consider writing in the new language. This temptation becomes much more pressing in view of the fact that the available native audience is limited, as compared to an almost unlimited reading public provided by the new language. Such efforts, i.e., the attempts to use the foreign language as a creative medium, have been made in the past, and most likely will be made with increasing frequency in the future, as the present generation of exiled writers familiarizes itself with the new culture and the potential audience.

But not all the writers, or potential writers, are of equal interest here. The generation of older writers, even if it attempted the experiment, could not achieve significant results. Their knowledge of the new idiom is too limited, too elementary, for they not only lack a rich vocabulary, but in many cases have grammatical and syntactic problems as well. Yet, because of their advanced age, they lack the time to learn. We must also exclude the generation of potential writers, those who as yet have no literary achievements to their credit. This group, born in one and maturing in another cultural atmosphere, presents somewhat of a cultural 'split personality' problem, which requires special discussion. On the other hand, to gauge the literary prospects of this group is to predict the future, a difficult task, promising only vague results.

A third group stands in different perspective. It possesses proven talent, and has some language skills; it is composed of younger writers, and, in isolated cases, of older writers who have been able to master the new language. This group of writers, faced with the possibility of using the foreign medium, is the subject of this article, to answer briefly the following two-folded question. "Is it possible to create in a foreign language, and are the achievable results comparable to those possible in the native idiom?"

The editors of *Books Abroad*, at one time, posed this question to foreign born critics and authors, now writing, to some extent, in English: how does a foreign-born writer develop a personal literary style in English? The responses are printed in the 2nd and 3rd issues of 1949, and they represent a variety of interesting comments upon this and related problems. The article contains valuable material and will be referred to later. (It is inter-

esting to note, that even if most of the correspondents despair of ever developing a distinct literary style, the replies, taken as a whole, are written in a highly developed English).

A language may be learned for purely communicative purposes, but it is much more difficult to use it as a literary medium; to develop a personal distinct literary style. The reasons for this are at the same time elementary and complex. Sketching them in general terms, it first must be noted that a language is an organic rather than an artificial attribute, which in the case of a writer, at least in part, is his creative essence. Therefore, a language becomes a literary medium only when its native spirit suggests creativeness and when emotions come naturally. This naturalness has a dual origin: it is either a native quality, i.e., when the language of the author is his native tongue or acquired in early youth, i.e., when the foreign language is learned early in its native surroundings, and is widely used thereafter. Otherwise, this naturalness, with very rare exceptions, is unattainable. Of course, even an older person of ability, especially if he possesses tangible linguistic talent, may master a foreign language. But, this is not enough. The idiomatic authenticity of the language will hardly ever be achieved. Several writers, polled by *Books Abroad*, complain of exactly this difficulty.

An ability to communicate may be sufficient for scientific or popular writing, although even here it is just as hard to achieve a personal style, but it is certainly insufficient for literary work. One may suggest, an extensive and systematic reading of works characterized by good language and style, as a means of gaining the needed acquaintance. But, is mere reading, no matter how extensive, sufficient to develop a personal and distinct style? Hardly, and this is another common experience of the writers in the survey.

KOSTAS OSTRASKAS, a graduate (M.A.) of the University of Pennsylvania, is the youngest Lithuanian playwright. One of his plays, "Kanarelė," had its premiere in Chicago last year (cf. *LITUANUS* — March, 1957). He is also active as a literary critic. At present he is completing his dissertation in the field of Lithuanian literature. — This article was first printed in "Literatūros Lankai," a literary magazine, and it appears here in an abbreviated version.

In short, after reaching maturity, it is possible to learn a foreign language, but rarely adequately, for creative purposes. A writer, learning a language in his later years, but desiring to employ it creatively is condemned to struggle with numerous obstacles, practical and psychological, of an almost insurmountable nature.

In his work, as far as the usage of language is concerned, a style-conscious writer attempts to achieve two basic results, namely to use the most exact word in its most effective place, and to attain the necessary syntactic construction depending on the circumstances. He will work on these aspects, changing a word or the order, until a satisfactory result is obtained, but in a foreign language an elusive defect will always remain. It remains elusive, precisely because the author's language is not native to him. Again, several respondents complain of this obstacle.

But this only raises other barriers. Faced with this problem, a writer must of necessity become much more conscious of his style, than he would if the language were native; he is forced to rely heavily on external aids. He is faced with the prospect of partially eliminating the personal touch of his style. This leads to further literary complexities. An author for whom style is part of his creative totality, will naturally feel a depressing helplessness, when coming face to face with this consequent difficulty, from which, if he is conscientious enough to realize the part, it is impossible to escape. Inevitably, the style will seem too primitive, inevitably there will remain the fear of cliché usage, easily avoidable in the native tongue.

Even an author, who is well on the road to a distinct style, has not surmounted all the difficulties he needs to overcome. Creative writing in a foreign idiom, is not merely the translation of thoughts and images from one language to another. One meets with still greater complexities.

A foreign-born writer, can never find acceptance in his new language, unless he breaks through to its spirit, surrenders to the culture which that language reflects, and merges himself, emotionally and spiritually with its birthplace. One of the aims of an author is to extract the hidden beauty of a language; having chosen a foreign tongue, a writer is seriously handicapped for it is almost impossible to reach these hidden depths. Herein lies the unfortunate dichotomy between aims and results. Forever, the foreign-born writer must labor to achieve that which comes naturally to his native colleagues. His greatest victory will only be partial; while doubting and laboring, he shall miss the inspired word. (This dichotomy is by no means confusable with a serious author's usual dissatisfaction with

achieved results, with the inability to reach creative perfection. Here we are speaking of the *disaffectation* which sees obvious shortcomings in the work, due to the limitations of the foreign language).

Consequently, a serious writer, respecting his creative powers, and unwilling to limit or blind them (something almost unavoidable in such a case), tends, even while living in foreign surroundings, and sufficiently knowing the language, to retain his native language. Heinrich Heine, even if his last twenty-five years were spent in Paris, and he had immersed himself in French cultural life, continued, with rare and insignificant exceptions to write in German. James Joyce, who left Ireland in 1912 never to return, in his nature and work never forgot Dublin, and wrote only in English, even though as a talented linguist, he was able to teach several languages. Of course, these examples are only several more striking ones, from many cases.

On the other hand, we also meet distinguished authors who made the experiment. Taking only the French language as an example, we find Oscar Wilde, Rainer Maria Rilke, D'Annunzio and T. S. Eliot, who have contributed something in that language. But, their creative excursions, with the possible exception of Wilde's, were scattered, rather insignificant, and they have to be considered as a literary *tour de force*.

There are, however, a number of exceptions which stand in sharp contradiction to the above mentioned examples. To name only two, the most striking case is provided by Joseph Conrad (Teodor Jozef Korzeniowski) who, although a Pole by birth, wrote only in English. Today, Arthur Koestler distinguishes himself in several languages. Nevertheless, these exceptions — and exceptions only because, usually these writers acquired the language in early youth and later lived surrounded by it — no matter how impressive, do not negate the rule: to write in a foreign language learned only when the author was mature, as capably as in the native tongue is almost or actually impossible. This creative process, from the beginning, is bound to limitations, a fact which will be reflected in the artistic value of the work. Such desire, however, if considered on the level of a general creative vocation, is understandable, and therefore cannot be denied. But, from the practical point of view and keeping in mind the hindering obstacles, desire and will are not sufficient because the projected aims and the achieved results cannot be reconciled. Thus, only the following question remains: Which serious and conscientious writer, consciously wishes to limit his creative powers and at the same time lessen the artistic value of his work?



The Youth Congress — Literature and Press Section

THE FIRST LITHUANIAN YOUTH CONGRESS

The youths of a national community in exile as the Lithuanians, find themselves in an extraordinary situation, with the task of integrating the influences of two worlds and with two different traditions on their hands. While maturing under the influences of this country and actively participating in its life, they are also expected to remain true Lithuanians and work for the eventual liberation of their motherland.

In order to discuss these particular problems and their responsibilities, young Lithuanians from everywhere in the United States and Canada met in Chicago last June 29-30. Morrison Hotel was the site for this important convention which was sponsored by the Lithuanian American Community, Inc., and the Lithuanian Students Assn., Inc., together with the Lithuanian Canadian Students Assn.

There are several other Lithuanian youth organizations a-

side from the all college and university students embracing Students Associations; these have their annual conventions and study days. The Lithuanian Youth Congress met to discuss those problems and tasks common to every young Lithuanian.

The Congress was attended by over 500 persons, including as guests some educators, scientists, and other prominent personalities of the older generation who are interested in lending support and advice to the young as well as hearing the discussion of various problems as they are seen by the younger generation. Search for understanding between generations, the problem of participation in the cultural and social life of the Lithuanian national community, and the problem of learning well the Lithuanian language were the basic topics of the Congress.

After short introductory speeches by the chairmen of the

sponsoring organizations, the American and Lithuanian national anthems, and invitational prayers, the Congress was officially opened. It received numerous greetings from important Lithuanian persons and institutions.

In the first session of the plenum a well prepared talk was given by Miss A. Krikščiūnas about the relationship of the young person to the family. She viewed him as a younger member of a family and also as a potential member of a new family of his own. The importance of a Lithuanian family with its traditions was stressed in raising a responsible new member of the Lithuanian community.

The second talk was delivered by Mr. B. Vaškėlis from Canada on the problems of youths once they reach the stage when they leave the family and start to participate in the various Lithuanian organizations. He took a look at the present activity of

LITHUANIAN FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL

On the 30th of June, 1957, in Chicago, Ill., at the International Amphitheatre, the Lithuanians of the United States and Canada, assembled for a folk-dance festival. Thirty folk-dancing groups, from all parts of the United States and Canada, assembled to recreate the national dances of their far away homeland. Each group, dressed in the best national costumes, blended into a colorful pattern, evoking many memories in the hearts of their audience.

The repertoire for the afternoon consisted of Lithuanian folk dances, songs, and games.

such organizations and at the possibilities in the future.

In the afternoon the Congress convened in various sections, such as the Art section, Humanities and Social Science, Sports, Literature and Press, and the Physical Sciences. The discussions within the sections centered around the ways of integrating participation in the life of this country with the expectations of the Lithuanian community and the ways of drawing the very young ones into the Lithuanian national community.

On Sunday, June 30, the second session of the plenum and the closing of the Congress took place. A well-organized closing speech was given by V. Adamkavičius who summarized the problems discussed and the ideas raised by the Congress. A number of resolutions was passed and the Congress was closed in a hopeful and festive mood. The afternoon was reserved for the Lithuanian Folk Dances Festival in which many of the young persons participating in the Congress also took part.

I. Čepėnaitė

Note: Due to a printer's error the Youth Congress photograph on the previous page has been substituted by a picture of the Folk Dance Festival. The correct caption should read: The Folk Dance "Sadutė". Photo by V. Valaitis.

There were the work dances — each representing the performance of a particular task, in the life of an agrarian people. Malūnas, which represents the turning of a windmill; Kalvelis — portraying a smith at his tasks; Rugučiai — the harvesting of grain. There were the wedding dances: Mikita — to be danced by the uninvited guests; Kepurinė — the farewell dance for the bride; Sadutė — danced at the home of the bride by her closest girl-friends on the eve of the wedding. This last one has only been recently stylized from a booklet printed in occupied Lithuania and was particularly well received by the audience. There were the dances and songs designed for sundry occasions — for village dances

and festivals. Each has been passed on from generation to generation of villagers. Then they were recorded by folklorists, and received their final form at the hands of choreographers.

In America, this was the first dance festival of such magnitude held by Lithuanians. They have been held in Lithuania, and on a small scale in the United States. In all, approximately 500 dancers and 700 school children, from Lithuanian Catholic grammar schools in Chicago, who played several national games, participated in this festival. It was well received, both by the thousands of Lithuanian exiles in the United States and Canada and by the numerous American guests.

K. S.

THE LITHUANIAN SECTION OF THE VOICE OF AMERICA

On February 16, 1951 — the anniversary of the Declaration of Lithuanian Independence — Longinas Kublickas, a captain in the Soviet fishing fleet, was listening to foreign news broadcasts at the home of a friend. For a while, nothing but the usual programs reached him, the BBC and Voice of America, in Russian, newscasts. Upon turning the dial, he was struck by a voice speaking in Lithuanian, and later by the playing of the Lithuanian National Anthem. The Lithuanian fisherman, who told of this event after his escape from behind the Iron Curtain, had heard the first Voice of America broadcast in Lithuanian. Since that day, six years ago, Lithuanian has been one of the 43 languages used by the Voice in its daily broadcasts.

Two half-hour programs are now prepared each day by the Lithuanian language section of the Voice of America for broadcast behind the Iron curtain. One originates in Washington, D. C., the other in Munich, Ger-

many. The European broadcast makes it possible to use medium length waves, thereby lessening atmospheric interference. Each program is rebroadcast three times daily, except during a serious world crisis, at which time rebroadcasting time is used for original programs.

A special Lithuanian language service, located on both continents, prepares the daily programs. The service is primarily interested in newscasts, with the American program covering American events, and the European — those taking place in Europe. It receives the usual copy of news and commentary prepared by the Voice for all its language services. This information is supplemented through the use of American, Lithuanian and Russian newspapers, and the wires of the major news services. Taped recordings of the radio at Vilnius, the Lithuanian capital, are made and utilized by the service. Both programs receive the same information. Both are informed of each others plans for



Lithuanian Folk Dance Festival

Photo by V. Valaitis

the day, besides receiving each others broadcasts.

About a third of the time, not used for world news, is devoted to Lithuania and Lithuanians in exile. On the Sixteenth of February, on Christmas and on other occasions, Lithuanian diplomats and other prominent Lithuanians in the West speak over the Voice. On occasion, a live signatory of the Act of February Sixteenth, a clergyman, a writer, or a worker, will be heard over the Voice of America. Whenever possible, the service sends its reporters to the more significant conventions or meetings, and later broadcasts recorded excerpts or

interviews. Often it will present a survey of the Lithuanian press. Experts in the field sometimes will write historical papers, reviews of new publications, or prepare commentaries on the latest events in occupied Lithuania.

A religious program is prepared each weekend in Washington. For three programs a Roman Catholic priest will be the speaker, on the fourth, a minister of either the Lutheran or the Reformed churches. On important religious occasions, representatives of all three churches will participate.

As is usual with the language services, the general direction

of the broadcasts is in the hands of the director of the American Information Agency. Each language service maintains daily contact with the agency. The details of each days programing are controlled by the director of the service, who for the Lithuanian section is Dr. K. R. Jurgela.

The programs are heard not only throughout occupied Lithuania, but in many parts of the Soviet Union itself. And, they are avidly received. On the occasion of the first anniversary of the broadcasts, a miniature ship, made of amber, was received and presented to then president Truman. Many of

BOOK REVIEW

A SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTION

FUNDAMENTAL CHILD PSYCHOLOGY by Dr. J. Pikūnas.
Illustrated with charts and photographs. 259 pp. Milwaukee: The
Bruce Publishing Company. 1957.

After World War II a number of Lithuanians, as well as other East Europeans, who had either voluntarily left their countries or been deported to Germany, experienced some anxious moments with regard to their future. The anxiety was, however, lifted when in 1948 the US Congress passed the Displaced Persons Act. This fact initiated a tremendous sociological experiment: a mass transplanting of political refugees, mostly intelligentsia to another continent. The problem of assimilation of these individuals as well as their relative value to the new country gave concern to those who endorsed this movement, and those opposing this action felt that the problems mentioned were insurmountable. These questions have not been answered yet to the fullest extent, but there is no doubt that those in favor of this immigration can point to specific empirical data which proves the meaningfulness of the acceptance of political refugees into the U.S.A. One specific empirical aspect is to

those escaping from occupied Lithuania, among them the fisherman mentioned above, have been regular listeners of the programs. Several refugees, after listening to the details of a successful escape, quickly followed suit.

The programs do not go without comment from officials of the Lithuanian Communist Party. There are the usual derogatory comments in the party press. Several short prose works have appeared on the subject. One prominent party official has even felt the need to write a poem on the Voice of America.

K. Skr.

be pointed out in this particular review.

Dr. J. Pikūnas, who spent the postwar years at the University of Munich in Germany, has now enriched the scientific literature of this country by writing a book on fundamentals of child psychology. The textbook is intended as study material for prospective teachers and as a guide for parents. Thus the range of those who may use this publication is certainly not very limited, and since, generally speaking, it is a good textbook, the effort can be considered as successful not only scholastically but economically as well.

The text material is organized on the basis of four major sections, which in turn have a number of chapters. The basic approach to child study is discussed in the first section with specific reference to history, basic concepts and general principles of development. In the second part the actual phases of development are described, and the author mentions four predominant ones. Part III is devoted to the basic aspects and dimensions of personality, and in the last section of his book the author discusses personality, the self, and child guidance. The book is illustrated with a number of interesting pictures of young children and contains a few valuable charts.

Since this quarterly does not pretend to be a psychological journal, the review is intentionally limited to a general evaluation with no specific emphasis on details. The publication attracts one's attention because the author has an educational background which is not frequently encountered nowadays. His particular synthesis of European and Ameri-

can trends of thought as well as areas of concentration is reflected throughout his book. Lack of a rigid adherence to any one of the basic psychological schools of thought is one of the manifestations of this particular educational background. The author is rather sceptical of Freud's theories, and, considering the latter's actual influence on European psychological thinking, the author's position is readily understood. It is unfortunate, however, that Dr. Pikūnas fails to provide the reader with specific evidence regarding lack of validity of Freudian theories (p. 86). The operationally oriented American psychologist will certainly be surprised to find an integral part of the book devoted to religious and moral training. The author must be commended for the inclusion of this topic; psychologists cannot limit themselves and simply ignore areas of subject matter because of lack of ability to define and study these areas operationally. Although the majority of bibliographical notes refer to publications in English, the author has also included a number of French and German references, and thus the reader is provided with a more balanced bibliography.

For Lithuanians living in the U.S.A. this textbook bears a special meaning. As far as is known, this publication is the first textbook written by a Lithuanian for American Institutions of Higher Learning. Numerous other scientific contributions have been made, but this seems to be the first textbook, and it certainly can be considered as a valuable contribution to the field of psychology. This fact, as well as many others, clearly shows the keen and sound judgment of those individuals who about one decade ago advocated the admittance of refugees into this country, and it may be safely assumed that such contributions to the field of science and arts have amply rewarded their efforts.

P. V. Vygantas





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